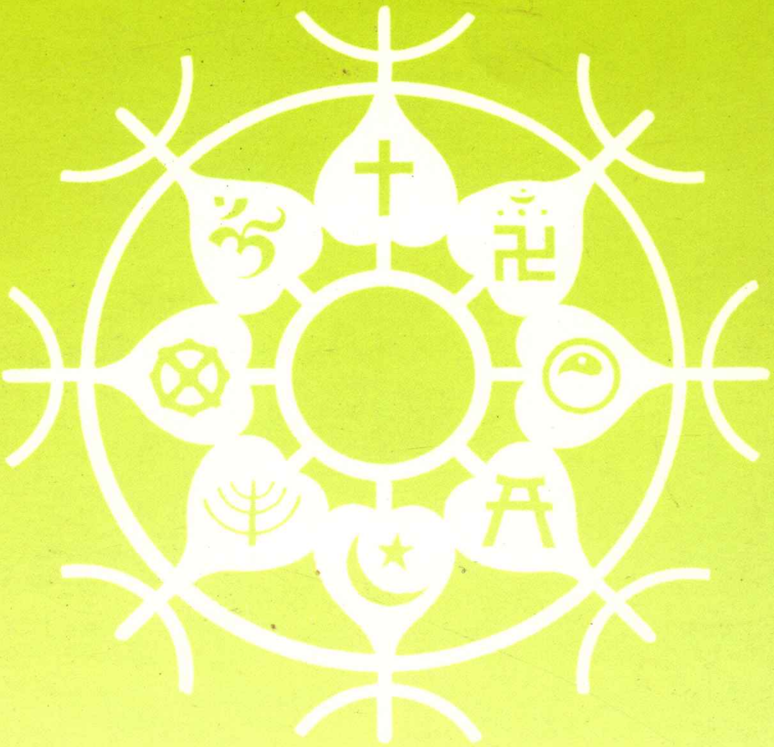
JOURNAL OF
DHARMA



TERRORISM AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

January-March 2007 Vol. 32, No. 1

JOURNAL OF DHARMA

An International Quarterly of Religions and Philosophies

EDITORIAL BOARD

Chief Editor: Saju Chackalackal, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, P.O. Dharmaram College, 560 029 Bangalore, India. Tel: +91-80-41116219; 6111(office). Web: www.chackalackal.com; E-mail: saju@chackalackal.com

Associate Editors: Augustine Thottakara, *Rajagiri, Kalamasserry*; J. G. Arapura, *McMaster*, *Hamilton*, *Canada*; Thomas Aykara, *CSR*, *Pariyaram*; Thomas Kadankavil, *Kottayam*; Thomas Kalam, *Bangalore*; Antony Kalliath, *NBCLC, Bangalore*; Thomas Manickam, *South Africa*; Thomas Manninezhath, *Namibia*; Kuncheria Pathil, *Jeevadhara*, *Kottayam*; Joseph Pathrapankal, *Anugraha*, *Kottayam*; William Sweet, *St. Francis Xavier University*, *Nova Scotia*; Kurian Kachappilly, *DVK*, *Bangalore*; Angela Wong Wai Ching, *Chinese University of Hong Kong*, *Hong Kong*; Mathew Chandrankunnel, *DVK*, *Bangalore*, Sebastian Alackapally, *DVK, Bangalore*, Jose Nadhikkara, *DVK, Bangalore*.

Board of Consultants: M. Amaladoss, *Vidyajyothi, Delhi*; J. P. Clayton, *Boston University*, *USA*; John Bowker, *Cambridge*, *UK*; Jung Young Lee, *Drew University*, *New Jersey*; Jyothi Sahi, *Bangalore*; G. J. Larson, *University of Indiana*, *USA*; Thomas Mampra, *Pune*; J. Masson, *Belgium*; Albert Nambiaprambil, *Upasana*, *Thodupuzha*; Oberhammer, *Vienna*; R. C. Pandey, *New Delhi*; Thomas Kochumuttom, *Risikesh*; Mathias Mundadan, *Jeevass*, *Aluva*; G. C. Nayak, *Bhubaneswar*; Raimundo Panikkar, *Barcelona*, *Spain*.

Book Review Editors: Mathias Mundadan and V. Venkatakrishna.

Executive Secretaries: Libeesh & Marialal, DVK.

Journal of Dharma is a scholarly research publication of inter-religious studies on current issues of religion, philosophy, and theology. While the editors recognize the need for free expression of differing opinions by our collaborators and contributors within the natural limits of academic freedom and responsibility, they do not necessarily subscribe to their views.

JOURNAL OF DHARMA

January-March 2007 Vol. 32, No. 1

TERRORISM AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Published by
Dharma Research Association
Centre for the Study of World Religions
DVK, Dharmaram College P. O.
Bangalore 560 029, India
Tel. +91-80-4111 6111; Fax: +91-80-4111 6000
E-Mail: info@journalofdharma.com
Website: www.journalofdharma.com

CONTENT

Editorial: Terrorism and Global Responsibility: An Alternative Reading in the Context of Globalisation 3
Saju Chackalackal

1. Dialectics of Terror: An Analysis of the Interrelationship among Religion, Conflict, and Terrorism 23
Jose Kuriedath

2. Terrorism and Global Response-ability 47
Brad Bannon

3. Transcultural Aspects of Warriorship 61
Maja Milčinski

4. Terrorism: A New Mode of Dehumanizing People into 'Targets' 73
Mathew Attumkal

5. Psychological Counselling Foundations of Terrorism 85
Jobi Thurackal

Book Reviews 95

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 3-22

Editorial

TERRORISM AND GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

An Alternative Reading in the Context of Globalisation

We live in a world that is terrorized by militant forces that cannot be exclusively attributed to any one region or country, or any particular religious or ethnic identity. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the economic boom brought about through various processes culminating in globalisation has not only achieved growth in leaps and bounds, but also has unleashed destructive powers that any responsible and peace-loving human being would never wish to visualize. As these forces are widespread all over the human habitat and as these forces are attempting to dismantle a civilization that has been founded on humane values, especially centred around a culture of life, various proactive initiatives are the need of the hour, so that human race as such and human civilization itself can be redeemed.

Terrorism, by and large, involves systematic forms of violence initiated against peoples and nations with the intent of intimidating personal and social life, thus to coerce decisions in favour of their objectives, apparently in the arena of political, ethnic or religious rights. A terrorist looks for redressing the grievances resulting from certain 'perceived' unjust social, economic, or even religious practices, involving highhandedness from one or another entity. Of course, terrorism is not at all a new phenomenon; the intensity and pervasiveness that are globally experienced and the acute awareness that has evolved in the first phase of the twenty-first century with regard to terrorist outfits and their activities are something unparalleled in human history. The small and large scale counter-terrorist activities that are initiated by various agencies – both governmental and non-governmental – must bring consolation to all those who confront the reality of terrorist violence and extinction, even if they are immediate or only remote possibilities. At the outset, it must be stated that all such agencies need to function under a moral framework, so that everyone involved would respond morally to the evils committed (even if it is done in the name of redressing certain evils unleashed by any agency) in a manner that is strictly human in character. For, immorality on the part of one person/entity does not warrant immoral responses on the part of any human agency; instead, every human agency must be capable of responsibly responding to the tragic situations arising from terrorist activities, so that our collective human involvement would enhance the prospects for a better morrow.

Terrorist violence is the end product of political as well as economic powers used and misused (in most of the cases, on the pretext either of religious or of national interest), that has drifted away from fair practices of justice due to falsely cultivated understanding of welfare and political establishment. As the whole globe is threatened by terrorist menace and as most of the humanity is sincerely concerned about finding a solution for the same, the United Nations (UN) has attempted to describe terrorism:

> … the targeting and deliberate killing of civilians and non-combatants cannot be justified or legitimized by any cause or grievance, and that any action intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants, when the purpose of such an act, by its nature or context, is to intimidate a population or to compel a Government or an international organization to carry out or to abstain from any act cannot be justified on any grounds and constitutes an act of terrorism.[1]

It is a fact that terrorist violence continues despite global awareness; thousands of lives are being obliterated from the face of the earth by various types of terrorist activities, including state-sponsored terrorism, equally practised by the technologically developed and developing nations, without even having a second thought about the value attached to human life. The callousness with which modern media chronicle deaths on a daily basis has ceased to be disturbing any more among the wider public; that is, if approached from a private angle, for me as an individual, terrorist killing does not matter, at least, as long as it does not affect my kith and kin (including political allies).

The ineffectiveness of most of our exercises to root out terrorist forces must call us – individually and collectively, nationally and internationally – to an earnest soul-searching. Most of the time, local governments, global super-power(s), and international bodies are happy to pass on the blame to some third parties, and are content in eliminating those forces as if it would bring an ultimate solution. In fact, on the pretext of fighting terrorism, most of the agencies are not at all ready to go beyond the peripheral analysis of the problems, as striking the root causes would be equally disturbing to them, and would point the fingers back on themselves. If a serious analysis could be carried out, in most of the cases the solution could be located in those parties who are ever ready to root out terrorist forces. For, most of the terrorists, to my mind, come into being due to injustices perpetrated (at least, as they perceive it) at the local or international levels, for which a just solution does not seem to be in sight, as these same forces are controlling the corridors of power, and would not let anything happen that would topple their strategies. As helpless and hapless victims, they lose both their hope in future and trust in political or allied agencies: helplessness coupled with anger and resentment may breed violence, mostly through unconventional methods. I do not, however, think that these terrorist forces wage a war in the hope of winning; they want to intimidate as many as possible, including the 'unchallengeable', with the hope of indirectly controlling these adversaries through violence. This is the opinion of Schweitzer and Shay, brought out through their analysis of various terrorist outfits:

---

[1] Kofi Annan, "Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All" (Report of the Secretary-General, presented at the Security Council Meeting on 17 March 2005), http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/contents.htm.

> The goal of the terror organizations is not to destroy the military capabilities of its adversaries but rather to influence their consciousness and impair their resolve from the point of view of determination and national strength. Thus, the terrorist aspires to impair and disrupt the lifestyle of the target countries, to spread fear and insecurity, and in this way to promote his interests. Therefore, the Information Age makes the society and economy of the modern Western state extremely vulnerable because of its great dependence on communication systems of all sorts for its daily survival.[2]

Thus, unprecedented backlashes are quite possible when any power tries to initiate a totalitarian control over the whole of the globe, whether it is done in the name of saving itself or saving the world.

Sovereignty is not merely a wish, but a necessity for any entity, even in an increasingly globalised world, which is being continuously harassed by the threat of terrorist activities, most of which results from suppression or oppression meted out to certain individual or national entities. Our age boasts of being civilized, which is said to be expressed in the democratic political processes that are in place in most of the developed and developing countries, and of having internationally acclaimed legal systems to impartially serve justice to all. Our civilization is understood almost synonymous with globalisation, which, according to many, has opened up the global market to satisfy the needs of everyone: the whole world is a market. It claims that the systems are in place to mete out justice. However, all these claims turn out to be hollow, as we observe that democracy – as it is practised at present – is only a sugar-coated progeny of the capitalist market, which is being easily manipulated by the self-interests of a very few; most of the time, these forces are made to swing in favour of national and international markets, as a result of which realizing justice remains a sheer mirage, especially when it comes to the global market, which the world is made to be. Indeed, market is the sovereign in the globalised world. When resources of a nation are plundered by these forces (mostly, through pseudo-legal procedures) and, in return, are given only meagre benefits, a gradual economic decadence and the resulting political unrest would follow. Simultaneously, the multinational companies and the nations to which they are attached definitely get a better edge in this bargain; as a result, they continue to surge ahead both in purchasing power and political mileage. So, the globalised market opens up the global resources to a world in which only a very few will be left with accessibility and entitlements. This poses us with a very unjust situation, though the present democratic as well as judicial procedures are least equipped to tackle these issues, as both these powers are in the iron grip of the market-might of the multi-nationals and their affiliated nations.

---

[2] Yoram Schweitzer and Shaul Shay, *The Globalization of Terror: The Challenge of Al-Qaida and the Response of the International Community*, New Delhi: Viva Books, 2004, 218-219.

Interestingly, we live in an imperialistic world in which subjection of peoples and nations is done not directly through muscle power, but through the might of economy. As the resources are controlled by the might of the market, an indirect subjugation of the people is put in place for the benefit of those nations that regulate the world economy, through hook and crook, both of which are considered to be acceptable as long as they would serve the selfish designs of such powers. Economic imperialism initiates the subjugation on a global basis. A declaration of the UN General Assembly brings to focus the inbuilt injustice and the fundamental moral problems emerging from such a situation: "The subjection of people to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and cooperation."[3] Hence, in this type of economic injustice we have a vital clue to understand one of the fundamental causes of terrorism. Although all terrorist activities need not be traced to such a foundation, it is a serious issue to be considered on a global scale.

This indicates that we still live in a world regulated by the powers of nature, and not of morality, though we continue to boast of being civilized. As Immanuel Kant, an 18th century moral philosopher, has put it, wherever there is no judicial system capable of enforcing laws to protect the individual rights, there prevails a state of nature.[4] Such a society is on the verge of violence due to the absence of alternative methods that would enable to adjudicate disputes between individuals in a just manner. As long as our world order and national governments cannot put in place an impartial legal system to address the grievances of individual persons and nations/entities, we cannot claim that we live in a civilized state. Kant insists that, in order to claim that any society is a civilized one, there must be a just constitution, allowing "the greatest freedom" for each along "the most precise specification and preservation of the limits of this freedom so that it can coexist with the freedom of others"[5] making room for mutual growth and development.

In the twenty-first century, thus, we are still in need of learning how to employ power without forfeiting humanity.[6] A closer and impartial look at what is taking place these days indicates that the mightier agencies (trans-national institutions, nations, multinational-corporations, etc.) are amassing more power through hook and crook, which is being used to get things done according to their vicious plans and vested interests. However, as these game plans continue to be fulfilled, the casualty is humanity: humanity of those who exercise this power as well as that of those on whom it is being exercised. As this situation continues to prevail, the powerful easily forget the fact that a surrender of humanity to power, which would crush the former under its iron grips, ultimately results in a total loss of humanity, humane sensibilities, and everything that is specifically associated with it. It ushers in a new epoch, but with the values of the old in terms of 'might is right'; that means, our society that claims to be civilized in many respects is going back to the principles of the animal kingdom! Exercising power without a sense of responsibility does not pertain to the human domains.

---

[3] The United Nations, "Declaration on Decolonization," §1 (1960). See http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/152/88/IMG/NR015288.pdf?OpenElement.

[4] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. and Intro. Lewis White Beck, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merril Educational Publishing, 1956, 85.

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. Norman Kemp Smith, London: Macmillan, 1929, A316/B373.

[6] As Romano Guardini put it, "power is as much a possibility for good and the positive as it is a threat of destruction and evil." R. Guardini, *Power and Responsibility: A Course of Action for the New Age*, trans. Elinor C. Briefs, Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1961, 6.

People's support in campaigning and fighting against terrorism and forces of destruction, affecting personal as well as civil life, is fundamental if such a move is to be initiated within the framework of a democracy. The global fight against terror is acclaimed to be spearheaded by democratic processes and agencies. In fact, the source of strength for all these agencies must be the people in whose name all these offensives are being carried out. However, all those who exercise power within a democratic framework shall never forget the ensuing responsibilities:

> Power entails responsibility, and the immense power generated by modern technology, medicine, instantaneous worldwide communication and the global economy will call for responsibility on the same scale. We can make a difference, and *only* we can make a difference. Without the unforced contributions of people of good will, politicians are powerless and international resolutions so many well-meaning words spent upon the air.[7]

That is, ultimately we need to move towards a shared political culture, which is founded on the bedrock of personal liberty and political self-determination, transparency in matters pertaining to local or domestic issues, and integrity and consistency in international policies and practices.

'War on Terror', in the shadow of which a lot of evils are being committed on a global scale, seems to be conducted on a dubious moral foundation. The core principles of moral life, freedom and responsibility are (mis)understood and put into practice on a unilateral and partisan manner in some societies. It has become a pattern among the industrialized nations to rate the freedom of themselves and their citizens as something sacrosanct and hence inviolable, while the freedom of the others is not even recognized: some of the military interventions initiated at the behest of safeguarding the whole world from the clutches of terrorist forces treat people of other nations, especially if they are attributed a 'terrorist' tag, as mere non-entities, not to speak about their humanity or dignity as persons. The net result of such a treatment of freedom entails an unacceptable understanding of responsibility as well. That is, these nations who enjoin an upper hand in handling the issues of world-terrorism unilaterally claim that restraining and rooting out terrorist outfits and individuals is ultimately their responsibility, which is quite dubious in its moral foundations and political overtones. The exercise of human freedom engenders a necessity of recognizing freedom among other individuals and peoples. Only when freedom is mutually recognized and endorsed, can anyone responsibly act in a society. Individual and national entities can, then, function for the common good. In this regard, a mix up of a moral understanding of freedom and responsibility with a partisan political exercise of freedom and responsibility should be avoided. They are not one and the same; instead, a proper moral sensitivity to the nature and exercise of freedom and responsibility must facilitate and enhance the political exercise of freedom and responsibility. If the former is absent, naturally the latter would be hollow, and may ultimately turn out to be detrimental to the humanity itself.

---

[7] John Sacks, *To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility*, London: Continuum, 2005, 265.

As terrorist menace continues as a fast-growing malignant cancer in human body, there is the need for ushering in a new outlook in which responsibility would be accepted by all parties involved, i.e., the terrorists as well as those who fight terror. Traditionally, terrorists alone are blamed and almost all actions initiated to root out terrorism centre exclusively around the terrorists. Here we fail to take note of other dimensions, some of which at least could lead us towards a better resolution and elimination of violence against humanity. We need to initiate comprehensive mechanisms in fighting terrorism; use of force – whether it is military intervention or economic coercion – is only one factor in the whole exercise. A proactive approach to terrorism has to be in place, in which instead of branding some individuals or nations as terrorist (as it was done by George W. Bush, the president of United States of America, in branding Iraq, Iran, and North Korea as "axis of evil"), an unbiased analysis of their claims as well as the foundations for such claims must be carried out. If there is a denial or deprivation of legitimate rights on the part of a people or a nation, whether they have been demanding for long or not, it would be unjust on the part of any agency to militarily or politically target them without initiating programmes to settle the injustices first. In fact, any military action without addressing the core issues (like cultural and economic alienation resulting from totalitarian approaches, like globalisation) with inclusive reform measures will only aggravate the problems associated with terrorism. It is against this understanding that we should evaluate the concerted efforts on the part of UN and other countries headed by the USA and the UK and the aftermath of the 'war on terror' that is continuing even today, which does not seem to be having any grip in containing the menace (but, to my mind, has become a catalyst in enhancing terrorist violence all over the world). If these nations that proudly fight against terrorists do not do a sincere soul-searching, the signs on the horizon indicate that the terror outfits like al-Qaida would only increase in number, size, and strength, which would ultimately be detrimental to all.

Agony of the death of our own shall not lead us to taking the lives of as many as possible. We learn from history that violence begets violence, death begets death. A humane approach calls for a break in the action-reaction dialectical process. Memory of violence and death shall lead us not into the jaws of death, but to a serene search for life, which can be catered to only through a non-violent approach. In view of a safer world freed from the clutches of terrorism, the rest of the world must become more tolerant and understanding. That is, we have to train a new generation in understanding and tolerance, mutual appreciation and acknowledgment of individuals – persons and nations – as they are. Certainly, tolerance and understanding, coupled with the struggle for justice, would certainly beget a society consisting of individual units that are tolerant and peace-loving. Indeed, that would enable the humanity to emerge from the shadow of death, and make a passage through human life, a societal life in its fullness.

From a practical point of view, if this is to be realized, we need to initiate more concerted efforts in this regard. Although listing all such measures would be a Herculean task, the following observations are made as representative suggestions which need to be taken seriously into account if we are sincere in our efforts to contain the terrorist menace on a global scale.

(1) Trade Practices: Globalisation is the catchword in our economic practices. It intents to liberalize all national economies with a view to facilitate the free flow of capital, which, according to experts on global trade and economic practices, would augment growth of all economies on par with the economies of the industrialized nations. As everyone wanted to have a part of the cake, there was an initial enthusiasm on the part of most of the nations to jump into the global market. The insistence upon free flow of capital would naturally result in a simultaneous siphoning out of the resources of every economy – not necessarily as natural resources – which would finally drain out its exchequer. An alternative balancing act could have been the free flow of labour, which would facilitate a mutual flow of labour and capital. This could have facilitated a healthier growth within the globalised world. However, as the free market theory continues to be running through the dynamics of globalisation and as profit remains the sole criterion of successful trade practices, there does not seem to be any sign on the horizon for a holistic business practice. Instead, global traders are augmenting their might not only through unjust economic practices but also through reinforced political and military manoeuvring.[8] Such practices are not based on the principle of justice, and would eventually cause unrest within the local economies, as people would gradually lose their purchasing power, and instability in the international relations. As the stronger economies would continue to wield control in their hands, naturally other economies would remain always at the receiving end, without having any bargaining power. As this would endanger the latter's very existence, and as a legitimate way out is almost impossible, as I have already stated, emergence of terrorist outfits would be natural. Containing them necessarily calls for more just

---

[8] Major General Smedley Butler (1888-1940), of the US Marine Corps wrote as follows in his book, *War as a Racket*: "I was a racketeer, a gangster for capitalism… I helped make Honduras 'right' for American fruit companies in 1903. I helped make Mexico, especially Tampico, safe for American oil interests in 1914. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenues in. I helped in the raping of half a dozen Central American republics for the benefits of Wall Street. The record of racketeering is long. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers in 1909-1912. I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests in 1916. In China I helped to see to it that Standard Oil went its way unmolested." cited in Tariq Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*, New Delhi: Rupa and Co., 2003, 285-286.

and humane trade practices across the globe. Globalisation slogans may sound good, but their impacts are detrimental to the majority in the long run. Therefore, justice must prevail in economic relations and trade practices, if at all terrorism is to be contained.

The globalised world, mostly controlled by the multi-nationals, tends to call for obliterating political passions on the part of every nation that is targeted through the armament of the US and, sometime, even the UN. Their interest is only to see that the whole world is a consumer base, the whole of which can generate huge profits which could be gradually pumped out from each national economy. In fact, this seems to be happening in one or the other nation that has already been targeted through the US political as well as military forces. Given the reactions from various corners of the world, the wish of the multinationals and the world-regimes to de-'politicize', as per their plans, does not seem to be coming forth. It is, indeed, an impossibility. As people become increasingly conscious of their losses and the treacherous means that are employed (e.g., ongoing political manoeuvring and the military might that are used in the Middle East to control the region and thus to siphon out more oil), it is natural that more and more would turn against the US agenda. It would contribute to further escalation of terrorist strategies among various peoples. This situation warrants a rethinking of the international affairs, and the mode of operation adopted by both political as well as economic agencies. There has to take place a reinstallation of sovereignty with every people; there needs to initiate a total stoppage of exploitative business strategies of multinationals, which are politically supported and even reinforced by internationally all-pervasive political powers. The aggressive strategies adopted by various political bodies need to deliberate about their own moral responsibility in redeeming humanity from the clutches of terrorist forces. It cannot be done without shedding the black veil of imperialism (political as well as economic), which is the cause of most of the tragedies that the world faces today. Let a people be themselves; let them evolve, whether it is a question of democracy or globalisation. No growth can be imposed upon anybody; it must result organically. Otherwise, it would only lead into more catastrophic situations, which finally run out of control, as it usually happens with most of the cancers, whether it is malignant or not.

(2) Revitalising the United Nations: Formation of the UN in the Post-World War II scenario is a milestone, and the initiative is praiseworthy. However, over the years, political map has undergone

tremendous transformation, and the responsibility of various agencies has to be understood from the changed perspective. The World War situation might have made the need of a particular structure in which the victors had a major role in the constitution and maintenance of the operations of the UN. Although some space was allocated for a few others, by and large, the governance of the affairs is still vested in the hands of a few member-states, mostly constituted by the industrially developed nations. In fact, this has resulted in an imbalanced exercise of power and lack of transparency, leading to partisan policies and unbecoming practices. This needs to be corrected if the UN has to play its role in maintaining international peace and security.[9] Although a leading role of one or another entity is essential for the efficient functioning of an organization, the affairs of the UN being sabotaged by a very few member-states, sometimes zeroing in on only one, has incapacitated it and has made it irrelevant to a great extent. This, however, does not mean that the UN has lost its relevance altogether. The contrived functioning of the UN is in need of reinforcing its present Charter and of restructuring its internal dynamics, in such a way that no single member or a few members of the UN can direct its policy affairs and military interventions in international affairs merely based on its/their (vested) national interests. In some of the recent military responses on terrorism, the lead-role of the US is certainly suspicious. For example, international law prohibits the use of armed force except under narrow circumstances. However, the US has claimed that Article 51 of the UN Charter[10] allows military interventions of the sort that they have initiated both in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, Article 51 deals only with self-defence. It does not include retaliatory strikes or pre-emptive strikes against a perceived or declared enemy. Moreover, it must also be kept in focus that unilateral use of armed force is allowed only in self-defence in the wake of an armed attack, that too, only until the Security Council has taken necessary measures to maintain international peace and security. As the responsibility is vested with the Security Council, any one (or more) member-state overlooking such provisions, initiating military strike against another member-state, and going without being reprimanded and restricted by the concerned bodies of the UN clearly indicates that the latter is incapacitated through the highhandedness of the US. This needs to be remedied, if any meaningful and acceptable process can be initiated by the UN against the perceived threat from terrorist forces on the local and international scenes. The need of the hour is not a helpless watchdog, but an effective and vigilant, fully functional agency of the UN in the international affairs, which I hope will provide the necessary ambience for realizing global responsibility against terrorism.

---

[9] The goals of the UN are established in its Charter. They are the following: "The purposes of the United Nations, as set forth in the Charter, are to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these ends." See, for more details: http://www.un.org/aboutun/basicfacts/unorg.htm.

[10] See http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/index.html for the complete text of the UN Charter.

(3) Reconstituting the Security Council of the UN:[11] The Security Council has the primary responsibility, under the UN Charter, to maintain international peace and security. The present structure of this council indicates that it has fifteen members, of which five of them are permanent. While the non-permanent members are elected by the UN General Assembly for a period of two years, the permanent members are China, France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Although this council is vested with much power[12] with regard to the handling of international affairs, it does not seem to be constituted on a democratic basis. The logic of democratically electing the non-permanent members is sound, though the adoption of the permanent membership of the five nations does not seem to be justifiable on any ground. Even though the role of these nations could be conceded in the immediate post-World War II context, maintaining the same structure in the 21st century seems to have a lot of oddities. What is the foundation based on which this permanency is maintained: is it retained in terms of their contribution to international peace and security (which is said to be the declared primary objective of the UN), their economic status, or military might? Even if any of these could be accepted as foundation, it

---

[11] A special discussion on the Security Council of the UN, and not on other organs of the UN, is justified precisely on its unique role in the operations of the UN. That is, while "other organs of the UN make recommendations to governments," the Security Council "alone has the power to take decisions which member-states are *obligated under the Charter* to carry out." See http://www.un.org/sc/membership.asp

[12] In fact, it is the most powerful arm of the UN in the context of international relations.

must be clear that there is no definitive status determined once and for all: if done, no more it would be the human world, which is quite dynamic and vibrant with life, with its own ups and downs. All these may vary from time to time and country to country. Then, the present structure of the UN does not seem to be making room for the positive dynamics that are to be initiated by the Security Council. Moreover, these permanent members in the council are said to be vested with "veto" power (otherwise known as the rule of "great power of unanimity"). That is, decisions of the Security Council, consisting of 15 members, on any substantive matters require nine votes, including the concurring votes of all five permanent members. This is a procedural fallacy – fundamentally undemocratic in character – and would permanently thwart the purpose of the UN, if international peace and security are to be understood on a non-partisan basis. The "veto" power enables these five permanent members to make sure that no action is initiated by the UN that would go against their vested interests.[13] In the history of the UN we come across with various instances in which this "veto" power has been a real 'incapacitating' factor, to initiate processes that would establish international peace and security. However, as the present structure of the UN does not envisage any chance of reconstituting the Security Council structurally, which again is the result of the 'permanent fallacy' of the UN organization, I am quite sceptical about a successful realization of its mission. Against the background of the increasing menace of terrorism, perpetrated both by members (alarmingly, including the permanent members of the Security Council) and non-members of the UN along with other outlawed terrorist agencies, if international peace and security are to be established, we are in dire need of reconstituting the Security Council of the UN. Both the provision of having a set of five (more or less) permanent members and their "veto" power should be permanently removed. No one shall enjoy any special privilege in the international affairs. As the UN is an international collective activity of the nations of the world, its affairs, including that of the Security Council, shall be conducted only on democratic foundations. As the number of the Security Council members should be limited – which shall be subject to the revision of the UN General Assembly – the present system of electing the

---

[13] Repeated use of the "veto" power by the US whenever there was a move to act against Israel in the Middle-East Stalemate is history.

'non-permanent' members may be continued to constitute the whole of the Security Council, which will then be more transparent, neutral, just, and effective in its procedures and actions. It would, in turn, augment the chance of fighting terrorism on a better and effective manner.

(4) International Court: The world has become smaller due to the revolutions in the arena of communication network and trade practices. We are closer to each other to such an extent that anything that happens at one corner of the world will have a 'butterfly effect' on the rest of the world. This is all the more so when it comes to the injustice experienced the world over. Although the coming together of various international entities is a praiseworthy event, we must realize the fact that the international relations have become extremely complex. It has given rise to competitions and exploitations: naturally, it can lead to more and more unrest. Moreover, military interventions in the modern era have been certainly contributing to the destabilisation of the whole world. Although many a military intervention is seemingly initiated to establish justice, there does not seem to be a consensus on the same. That is, there are differences in the understanding and practice of justice itself on the international scene. Further, our age is witnessing many brutal military interventions initiated at the behest of vested interests, but made out to be so for the establishment of the welfare of the whole world. As such claims are quite apprehensive, our globalised world stands in need of an international court (unlike the one now in operation under the arm of the UN), which would be unpartisan enough to look into the dynamics of our international relations and to establish justice. This court should also be enabled to address the issues related to unjust practices prevalent among different entities across the globe, even if it is done in the name of rooting out terrorism, or in the name of providing military or economic aid. The world is in need of an international court of appeal so that justice will not remain a mirage for the weak and unprotected. If ours were to remain a civilized society, we need to move along the line of dispensing justice on international level: it is the need of the new globalised world order.[14]

---

[14] Although international court has become a reality now, it seems to be in need of power and patronage. The sitting president of the United States of America, in the first few months of his regime, had reiterated his opposition to the international criminal court. Moreover, he has been adamantly against any US citizen being subjected to the jurisdiction of the international criminal court. Indeed, if every nation tends to be retaining its national interests as the sole good, naturally, no international institution can function effectively. The anomaly is that these same nations that resist

(5) Avoiding Partisan Political Policies and Practices: When it comes to international relations, governments should follow a consistent policy, which is essential to fight terrorism. The adage "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" seems to be indirectly endorsed by many, but is an anomaly. Identifying and fighting a terrorist is not a subjective issue, but must be objective and definitive. However, even those nations which are bent on rooting out terrorist forces all over the globe do not seem to be following a definitive policy. Approach of the US, for example, with regard to Pakistan or Saudi Arabia seems to be quite dubious. The US has been soft on those nations that are its allies, and are given waivers even with regard to accommodating parties that are subversive and direct perpetrators of terrorist activities. In his book, *Tinderbox: US Middle East Policy and the Roots of Terrorism*, Stephen Zunes highlights the unjust practices carried out by the US in dealing with Saudi Arabia:

> … in a further extension of this dynamic where countries are treated as pariahs or as allies based on their allegiance to US strategic interests, at least one staunch US ally suffers no sanction despite clear evidence that at least some leading officials in government advance the agenda of terrorists: Saudi Arabia has contributed more funds to extremist Islamic groups connected with terrorism than has Iran or any of the other so-called "rogue states." As has been noted, fifteen of the nineteen hijackers of September 11 were Saudis, as was Osama bin Laden. Yet there is no talk of routing out terrorists in Saudi Arabia through military force.[15]

If this sort of a policy is adopted by any nation, their rhetoric on the fight against terrorism is quite hollow and any number of practices quite fruitless. Their sincerity in opposing terrorist forces is challengeable.

Moreover, the involvement of many countries against terrorists is politicized beyond measure to take both political and economic advantages. This is once again an eye-opener with regard to their vested interests in this regard. Just as the US has been the economic victor of the

---

the intervention of international organizations in their affairs are the most vocal and coercive when it comes to bringing other nations to the international justice.

[15] Stephen Zunes, *Tinderbox: US Middle East Policy and the Roots of Terrorism*, London: Zed Books, 2003, 195-196.

two world wars,[16] continued military engagement of the troops of various nations, whether in the name of fighting terrorism or peace keeping, all these finally bring in economic and strategic advantages to many. This clearly indicates that the ultimate goal of most of the international agencies in their fight against terrorism is influenced by imperialistic attitudes and goals. Both the US and the UK have been repeatedly accused of extending colonial practices in their foreign policies as well as in their thrust to establish a terrorist-free world. The Middle East stalemate is said to be betraying a long standing economic neo-colonialism (spearheaded by the US through its multinational companies), and the recent spurt of terrorist violence has given them unhindered access to many economies than they had even planned!

(6) Human Rights Issues: National and international agencies are involved in fighting terrorists. The increasing menace of terrorism experienced in this first part of the 21st century seems to be a justification for such agencies to take recourse to any means, if it has the tag of fighting terror. This has opened up the avenues to another form of terror committed by the state itself. A national example from India would be the POTA ordinance,[17] which had given a blanket cover to fight the terrorists within the borders of India. However, it was repealed later as many government functionaries started to exploit it in view of segregating and suppressing their political as well as religious foes. In the hands of Hindu fundamentalists, for example, POTA was an effective tool to harass and even terminate Muslims, whose activities are wrongly perceived to be always against national interests. The same trend is observed on the international scene as well. The US, for example, is said to be violating the human rights issues in their handling of Afghan and Iraq 'war

---

[16] In the *Clash of Fundamentalisms*, Ali writes: "The United States emerged as the economic victor of the two world wars. Its major competitors had been enfeebled: Germany divided, Japan occupied, the British Empire in terminal decline. Its own economy prospered more than ever: immensely rich in raw materials, enjoying a greater equilibrium between industry and agriculture, a geography and demography that enabled it to practise economies of scale on mass-production lines, within an inviolable mainland." Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms*, 289-290.

[17] "The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002," enacted on March 28, 2002 (Act No. 15 of 2002), makes provision for the prevention of, and for dealing with, terrorist activities and for matters connected therewith. See http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/document/actandordinances/POTA.htm for the detailed text of the Act.

criminals' (who are tagged as terrorists, even without any evidence for the same). The non-territorial camps in which these people are treated have been practising abusive and coercive methods to extort information. Moreover, some of the inhumane practices that have been revealed to the rest of the world through certain leaked media coverage indicate that there is no hesitation on the part of the authorities in such camps to violate human rights. Surprisingly, the US that often criticizes other nations with regard to human rights violations has neither been transparent nor inward looking as to their own practices, especially when it came to the treatment of foreign nationals if they stood against their national interests. Such a response prevails in many instances related to the handling of people or nations 'branded' as terrorists, and it becomes increasingly difficult to come out of this vicious circle. As more and more human rights violations happen, those who cannot counter them in the same coin may look for stealthy alternatives, which would definitely look more akin to the terrorist programme. For me, it is not a question of winning or losing: it is certainly a loss of humane sensitivity and a blatant neglect of human rights, which are supposed to be the bedrock of many a human society. It is, therefore, far more fundamental that human rights issues are given a far more central role in dealing with terrorism, if it should usher in a new era of respect for the humanity of all, an antidote to the ills emanating from the vicious cycle of terror.

(7) Political Stability across the Globe: Stability is an antidote to many of the political chaos that we witness within different forms of governance, including democracy. It refers not only to one or other nation but every entity in this world. Justice in politics cautions against destabilising nations and economies for the sake of fighting against terrorist forces. Instead, what is called for is the support and enhancement of local governance through which the divisive forces can be brought under control. Taking into account the net result, direct and indirect destabilisation of governments all through the history – drawing inspiration from the 'divide and rule' policy of the British Imperialism – has been only counterproductive; if the perspective is limited to the advantage of one agent or nation, of course, there is still scope for more state sponsored violence and political destabilisation. However, if peace among the humanity is the target of the agencies that involve in the 'war on terror', naturally, we need to reconsider any individualistic benefit that would accrue from such processes.

Each individual entity needs space and time for its organic and sustainable development – in its political, economic and moral spheres. Political passions are needed in maintaining a people, though such passions may go out of control, if not checked timely and appropriately. Again, this has to take place organically. Merely by claiming that a people are not able to regulate their affairs by themselves does not spontaneously issue a mandate for any other body – except the one that is accepted by the people themselves – to initiate pre-emptive strikes against them, however promising that would look like. Such actions have been found to be quite counterproductive in human history. Therefore, a properly checked political passion, which can initiate healthy self-reliance as well as growth along with respect for the other, especially for human life, can be initiated only by an internal principle or agency. External powers can be helpful in this regard only in terms of indirect promptings by way of creative support – in the field of education, technical know-how, etc. This is a responsibility that both the UN and the US have to accept; if done, naturally, we will be able to see a responsible world emerging – slowly, but steadily.

I have attempted to highlight certain areas which need attention in setting the global situation right for realizing global justice through responsible involvement of individuals as well as international bodies. Apart from these, as responsibility has to ultimately well up within individuals, which could be then organically extended to the rest of the society, the role of religion needs to be emphasized. Despite the promulgation of civil laws by the state and the self-legislation of the moral laws by individuals, when it comes to acting morally (i.e., responsibly), it is genuine religion that is the best agent of transformation. With its own inner dynamics that go beyond the realms of this life and the immediate consequences, religions or religious principles act as moral catalysts in almost every society. In all our human endeavours, whether stamped as sacred or profane, religious or secular, the perspective of a person animated by religious faith must anchor on the presence of God/Divine/YHWH/Brahman (whatever be the name that is ascribed to this supernatural reality), so much so that he/it becomes an empowering presence that would prevail over any and every chaos that emerge in our world. The characteristic feature of this world and the empowering presence is not of 'controlling' any one; however, it contains an open invitation to partake in the wholesome existence, despite the chaotic situation brought about by human irresponsibility and carelessness as regards the 'other' and the 'Other'. Human responsibility will not ensue merely from a rational discourse and judgment. It would come forth only from a serious deliberation about the human reality within the context of supernatural motive that is at play in the world, but recognizable and practicable only by those who are ready to open up their horizons to that force which can only be experienced, not discussed and discovered.

Taking various dynamics related to terrorism, this issue of the *Journal of Dharma* addresses "Terrorism and Global Responsibility" from various angles. Jose Kuriedath, in his article "Dialectics of Terror," makes a sociological analysis of religion in relation to violence and offers insights as to why religion becomes a source of conflict, including its most destructive type, namely, terrorism. "Terrorism and Global Response-ability" by Brad Bannon seriously engages the issues related to terrorism from the point of view of global responsibility; his analysis is an invitation to understand human ability to move towards a cosmopolitan dialogical perspective which, he hopes, would bring about openness and peace through a commitment to the cause of humanity. Against the background of *Iliad* and *Mahabharata*, two epics dealing with massive battles happening almost contemporaneously, Maja Milčinski proposes that handling the issues related to war and violence requires primarily mastery over oneself and freedom from selfishness resulting in a harmonious understanding of spirit and body, which have been trans-culturally epitomised in various religious writings. Mathew Attumkal's article deals with terrorism as a new mode of dehumanizing people into 'targets'; he brings to focus the fact that it is a human-made problem and, hence, requires primarily a human solution, so that dignity of human persons can be re-established. In "Psychological Counselling Approach to Foundations of Terrorism," Jobi Thurackal analyses the psychological impact terrorism makes on social life and proposes that identifying the psychological foundations and handling them with the assistance of counselling techniques is a necessity if our society should contain terrorism.

Fight against terrorism is not fighting al-Qaida; that is only the tip of the iceberg. Prevalence of injustice on a global scale and the inability on the part of those who are at the receiving end to facilitate a direct resolution and establishment of justice may still continue to resort to unconventional methods of violence with a hope of winning back their dues (only through the latter's desperate attempts). Although they are almost sure that none of these attempts would finally bring a resolution (as the political and military might of those who deny justice is far beyond their reach) to their advantage, having access to unconventional methods of retaliation and availability of a new information environment based on modern methods of communication and networking, these subversive forces would continue operate with ease spreading fear all over. As the novel methods of terrorist strikes continue to evolve unconventionally within the new matrix of global communication, the economic, military, and political powers ensuing from globalisation do not seem to be coming to grip with the former. A head-on collision between the super power(s) and globally positioned subversive terrorist forces is not going to bring any advantage to humanity as a whole. Yet, it is a necessity that peace and tranquillity are to be re-established. To realize this, a more conscientious approach is needed: it must be capable of addressing the injustice that is all pervasive in the present mechanisms of social life, especially globalisation. Addressing the ills of globalisation and identifying the solutions, I believe, must be the primary task of all those who take upon themselves the responsibility of fighting terrorism.

Saju Chackalackal
Chief Editor, JD

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 23-46

DIALECTICS OF TERROR

An Analysis of the Interrelationship among Religion, Conflict, and Terrorism

Jose Kuriedath[◆]

1. Introduction

This is a sociological analysis to show how religion functions in a society and why religion becomes a source of conflict including its most destructive type, namely, terrorism. It also attempts to explain how, in spite of such divisive ability, religion has the potential for nurturing unity in the society, even through conflict.

Terrorism is the act of creating terror or extreme fear in people, usually in civilians, through violence or threat of violence with the intention of making them (and sometimes others too) concede to the demands of those who create fear. The United Nations Organization has described terrorism as an act "intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act."[1] The persons or groups who create terror, their target groups, the means and style of creating terror, its probability for success or failure and the goals sought to be achieved through terrorism – all these vary very much, if we look at the incidence of terrorist activities in human history. In recent times, the incidence of terrorism has increased and the means of creating terror have become technologically very advanced and sophisticated.

However, there seem to exist certain common characteristics that can be identified in the behaviour pattern of terrorists of any kind. There is a great amount of influence of fantasy rather than reality behind the calculation of terrorists. Driven by ideologies, most of them do not care to test the probability of success in their violent efforts. Secondly, almost all

---

[◆] **Dr. Jose Kuriedath** CMI, holding Master's Degree both in philosophy (Delhi) and sociology (Karnataka) and a Ph.D. in sociology (Kerala), is a renowned social analyst and a much sought after educationist. At present he is the director of Jeevas (Aluva, Kerala), a religious research and renewal initiative.

[1] Kofi Annan, *Larger Freedom* (A Report presented at the Security Council Meeting on 17 March 2005).

terrorists act out of frustration of not being able to achieve what they want because the opponent they face is usually stronger than them. They come to realize that they will not be able to win in a straight combat and hence resort to terrorism. Thirdly, they are convinced of the rightness of their demand or position. Due to such a strong sense of righteousness, they become intolerant, dogmatic and authoritarian and ruthlessly treat even their own people who deviate from their view. Fourthly, a great sense of utopianism is found in many of them. Many terrorists seem to feel that, if and when they win, a new perfect future lies just round the corner. Fifthly, almost all terrorists are socially isolated individuals and groups. Their views and lifestyle set them apart from the mainstream of social life. Finally, most of them do not have or at least do not manifest soft feelings and are quite cold-blooded. Such a condition is created in many through a thorough education process which might be called brain-washing.

Even though terrorist activities have been motivated by many factors, the most frequent reasons have been political and religious. Though these two fields are distinct, there is a very close link between the two. Both religion and politics have tried to influence each other and control the other field for one's own advantage. They have also used each other for advancing their goals. Thus, between the two, there is a close and strong link that has been well established during the course of history. Besides, these two are the most powerful areas that still command strict obedience from the followers; religion through a bond of primordial feelings including fear of divine wrath and politics through human drive for exercising power over others. Hence, there has always been a tendency on the part of the militant groups in these two areas to make use of fear as a force to control others.

No serious student of history can deny that most religions, at several crucial turning points of history, have turned out to be divisive rather than unifying forces, even though many who are now engaged in inter-religious dialogue try to highlight the latter. Instances that manifest the conflict-generating nature of religions are available in abundance from the time of primitive religions up to the latest forms of religious terrorism (e.g., Al-Queda). In fact, Christianity has been no exception. It is in the context of the continuing conflicts in several parts of the world, created in the name of religion by its followers, that this investigation is conducted.

2. The Problem

Society, as we know, is a complex network of several interdependent social systems which can be rather broadly categorized into two types: organizational systems and meaning systems. The former have been developed by human beings in order to organize their manifold activities – economic, political, social, religious, educational, etc. – into stable patterns and the latter to impart the necessary perspectives, explanations, or meanings to those patterns. Religion, as a system, is in a peculiar position: it has organizational as well as meaning-imparting roles.

As an organizational system, religion gives shape and structure to human being's relationship with the superhuman power (or powers) that is called God(s) and to his/her relationship with fellow human beings and the world in as much as the latter are conditioned by the former. It is commonly said that religion exercises this function through the well-known three C's – creed, cult, and code. Even as these components of religion help us to organize a set of human relationships, they also inculcate in us certain fundamental life-perspectives that explain the overall organization of the society. Thus, religion becomes a meaning system as well.

An organizational system has two dimensions: institutional and associational. Social institutions are simply standardized and accepted modes of behaviour evolved by the society in order to obtain some determined goals and satisfy certain needs. But, such social institutions necessarily give rise to social associations since the former can survive only through the latter. It is associations that evolve, maintain, and change social institutions to suit the varying needs of human beings. The religious associations we have today are too varied in nature to fit into any fixed type. They can be as bureaucratic and centralized as the Catholic Church or as traditional and non-centralized as the Hindu community. The organizational pattern of the associations varies partly due to the very nature of religions and partly due to historical reasons. For example, the Semitic religions seem to have developed more authoritarian and monocratic structures than the Indian religions.[2] Similarly, religious associations that came under the influence of the western Roman tradition have become more bureaucratic (legal-rational) than the associations, even of the same religion, which until recently kept a certain degree of what Max Weber called "the un-rationalized religiosity of the Orient."[3]

---

[2] Max Weber, *The Sociology of Religion*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1964, 55. Weber distinguishes between ethical prophetism and exemplary prophetism. Even though the difference in the nature of structures and their flexibility are clearly distinguished by Weber through this categorization, the terms used seem to be rather

Now, applying these concepts to religions, it may be asked: if religions have been divisive forces at any time generating conflicts and even terror in the human society, how far has it been so as an association, as an institution, and as a meaning system? Even though the above three aspects of religion function interrelatedly, it is important to bear in mind these conceptual distinctions in order to clearly understand the role of religions in producing conflict as well as resolving it.

3. Religious Interests and Conflict

Associations are the outcome of lasting social relationships which a number of individuals develop through reciprocally oriented social actions. According to 'social action' theorists, social relationship is often characterized by conflict, because power is exercised in action, wherefrom social relationships develop. Power is exercised in social action when it is intentionally oriented to carrying out the actor's will against the resistance of others.[4] Why do social actions often tend to exercise power and try to control others? Human beings tend to control others since they want to enhance the satisfaction of their interests by obtaining the scarce resources in the society. By 'resources' we mean not just material things alone, but both material and non-material goals that will satisfy the manifold interests of human beings. There are material interests like wealth, social position, and power, and value interests like attainment of religious and spiritual goals. As long as such resources are not freely available to all (even many of the spiritual resources are scarce, since the conditions on which their availability depends on are not free), people tend to control others in order to prevent them from attaining these scarce resources so that their own opportunities are not reduced and to obtain them for themselves in order to satisfy their own interests.

---

inadequate since both concepts are not exclusive; some religions are both exemplary and ethical.

[3] J. C. Alexander, *The Classical Attempt at Theoretical Synthesis: Max Weber*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983, 93.

[4] Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, ed. G. Roth and C. Wittich, New York, NY: Bedminister Press, 1968, 53.

Every association, therefore, is the embodiment of man's collective striving for the satisfaction of some interests. If the interests of a number of associations happen to be the same, conflict becomes unavoidable, since no association can succeed in achieving their goals without exercising power with reference to other similarly placed associations. For, from a 'conflict' point of view, one cannot obtain the resources that are scarce, without controlling others. The element of power in social action, therefore, is the primary source of conflict in religious associations too, because they are also associations. In this exercise of power and the consequent conflict, "religion brings … a greater emotional intensity and a deeper motivational thrust than language, region or other markers of ethnic identity… With historical allusions from sacred rather than profane history, its metaphors and analogies having their source in sacred legends, the religious justification of a conflict involves fundamental values and releases some of our most violent passions."[5] When the interests are, thus, religious and the goals that need to be achieved are so scarce and imbued with religious feeling, the power that is exercised sometimes become violent, causing even physical harm to others. For example, when a violent act is intimately linked to a religious struggle (e.g., over the control of a holy site), failing in the act becomes equated with a spiritual failure, which, for the highly committed, is worse than their own death or even the deaths of innocent civilians. In this mindset, one can find the foundation of the logic behind any lack of consideration for lives even in religious terrorism. The lives are targeted not because they are threats to the terrorists' goals, but because they are considered more effective means for creating extreme fear among the people and subduing the opponent in the struggle.

Over and above this natural tendency of the religious associations to become strongly conflict-generative, the superimposition and coalescence of additional interests in the course of history may and do reinforce the tendency and aggravate the divisive impact. If two religious groups are active in the same place and at the same time, conflict emerges because their religious interests themselves collide; besides, other types of interests are also superimposed in the course of time. As Kakar notes again, "what we are witnessing today is less the resurgence of religion than of communalism where a community of believers not only has religious affiliation but also social, economic, and political interests in common, which may conflict with the corresponding interests of another community of believers sharing the same geographical space."[6]

---

[5] Sudhir Kakar, *The Colours of Violence*, New Delhi: Penguin India, 1995, 247-248.

This power play obviously has two sides: those who are more powerful dominate and those who are less powerful are compelled to become victims of power. Usually, those who think that they would be less powerful in an open combat resort to the so-called terrorist activities. As indicated above, their aim is to generate terror in their opponents and make them relinquish power and concede to their demands. Hence, those labelled "terrorists" rarely identify themselves as such, and typically use other terms specific to their situation such as separatists, freedom fighters, liberators, revolutionaries, vigilantes, militants, rebels, jihadis, mujaheddins, etc. We, however, see a conflict in the perspectives themselves: while the dominant group looks upon the acts of terror as illegitimate and criminal, those who engage in terrorism often consider the acts as legitimate to liberate themselves from exploitation. I shall illustrate this interplay of conflict with a couple of examples from history.

3.1. Between Christianity and Islam

Today's clash between the western powers and the Islamic fundamentalists, labelled by some as clash of cultures, is a very good example of the dialectics of religious conflict growing into terrorism. The history of conflict between the followers of these two religions is quite long, extending back to the early years of Islam. It began with the attempt of others, including Christians, to control the spread of Islam in Europe, on the one hand, and to the success of the latter to gain control of the Iberian Peninsula, on the other. Later, the Christians succeeded in liberating Europe from the control of the Muslims. The control of the Middle East by the Muslims, however, remained a disturbing issue for the Christians. Both the Church and the Muslims had, besides the religious goal of obtaining control over the holy sites, several vested political, economic, and status interests in this region. First, both religious groups claimed that the land is holy for them. Secondly, both were prophetic religions with universal proselytising mission, wanting to grow into all parts of the world. Islam in addition claimed that it was an integral way of life rather than a religion in the usual sense of the term and thereby advanced a religious justification for its political interests. From the part of the Christians, a complex set of such motives as the papal desire to recapture the Holy Land and reunite the Eastern and the Western parts of the Christendom, the political need of the West Europeans to wrest control of the Western as well as Eastern Mediterranean area from the Moslems, the love of adventure among the rugged knights of Europe and their lust for land – the superimposition of such non-religious interests made the clashes all the more fierce and determined.[7] The claims for the monopoly of spiritual resources for the whole humankind together with the above noted non-religious interests could not be settled without repeated wars for a long period. West Asia and Southern Europe finally heaved a sigh of relief only when one group established its dominance to such an extent that the other was either wiped out or was forced to give up its missionary efforts and maintain a low profile conceding the dominant role to the other.

---

[6] Kakar, *The Colours of Violence*, 239-240.

In the middle ages, the Muslims – through a political and religious revival – once again extended their sway over a vast area of Asia; the powerful Ottoman Empire was the zenith of their growth. But, the dream of their lasting control over Asia was shattered by the western powers that destroyed the empire and brought the region under their colonial power. Though most of the countries of this region gradually gained political independence from the western powers in modern times, they continued to remain under the commanding influence of western economic interests; even politically many regimes of the region were forced to depend on the western governments for their survival. The western countries not only exercised control but also began to display very openly their naked economic and political interests in this region, which they were not easily ready to give up. The clash of interests eventually gave rise to a group of militant men who realized the practical impossibility of defeating the western powers through a military confrontation. Their only other available option was to create fear or terror in them and make them withdraw their economic as well as political hegemony. Bin Laden and his team are products of this dialectics.

The very conservative Wahhabi type of Islam that is practised in Saudi Arabia became a fertile ground to arouse primordial feelings that were necessary for nurturing enough power to generate a clash with the westerners. The group of Bin Laden found in the current situation of the region, particularly in Palestine, the decline of not only the political and economic interests of the Muslims but the loss of Islamic dignity. While the exploitation of the West Asian economy and political system by the westerners did not arouse sufficient feelings to fight against them, the inclusion of the issue of religious identity and the need to fight for it, even sacrificing one's life as a martyr (even if it is terrorism and is against innocent citizens), aroused enough emotional power for a step like the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. As if to demonstrate that their intention was to defy and terrorise the western powers all over the world, the attacks occurred in different parts of the globe like Kenya, Tanzania, Bali, Madrid, London, etc.

---

[7] Thomas Bokenkotter, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church*, New York, NY: Doubleday, 1979, 164 ff. Also see, Henri Daniel-Rops, *Cathedral and Crusade*, vols. I & II, New York, NY: Image Books, 1963.

3.2. IRA in Northern Ireland

The problem of violence that existed between two religious groups in Ireland (namely, Protestants and Catholics) and for which some solution is being reached in recent times is quite widely known. It is also well known that though the problem is between two religious groups, the issue is not at all religious, but rather political. The Republic of Ireland is dominantly Catholic, while the United Kingdom is vastly Anglican. The province of Northern Ireland that is still part of the United Kingdom due to the vicissitudes of history is dominantly Protestant, while geographically the province is situated in the island of Ireland and has close physical affinity to the Republic of Ireland. The Catholic community in Northern Ireland is a minority that is forced to live under the Protestant majority in an otherwise Catholic island; they strongly desire to be affiliated to the Republic of Ireland. The Protestants who live in the Northern Ireland fear that, in such an eventuality, they will become a minority and will lose the advantage they enjoy now. Hence, they resist such an eventuality and want to keep the status quo. The Catholics who consider their affiliation to the United Kingdom a residue of ancient colonialism want to become free from the baggage of history.

These two conflicting desires of two communities which are identified through their religious membership have blocked settlement of the issue for quite a long time. When solution was seen as remote, the Catholics became nervous and began to resort to the so-called terrorist activities. IRA (Irish Republican Army), a militant outfit of the Catholics in Northern Ireland, spread violence through bombings and sporadic attacks. Here, again, what we see is the confluence of two crucial situations: the realization that one's interests will not be protected within democratic methods or in open confrontation and that there is still sufficient potency for their religious feelings to arouse passion and channel it into political goals through violent means.

3.3. Conflict between Christianity and Hinduism

Another example would be the occasional violence between the Hindu and Christian communities in North India, particularly in recent times. One of the essential interests of both Hinduism and Christianity is to maintain and, if possible, enhance the number of the followers of the respective religious traditions. Besides, for the Hindus, religious adherence is not essentially a matter of choice but an inalienable birthright; any attempt to interfere in that right is viewed with anger, since it is an attack on a Hindu tenet. The Hindu religion takes pride in being the eternal religion (*Sanātana Dharma*) that cannot let itself die out. On the other hand, Christianity, as a proselytising religion, claims a fundamental right not merely to profess and practise the religion but also to propagate it. The end result of propagation is naturally the change of religious affiliation by the non-Christians. These opposing interests did not generate strong conflicts in the past since the Hindu community was not a centrally organized association. But, due to the influence of the modern revivalist movements, the Hindu community is becoming better organized politically as well as socially. Its leadership has succeeded in developing a sense of religious and cultural, if not social, identity among the manifold castes and sub-castes.

In addition, as in the case of the previous example, several non-religious interests have been superimposed and made to coalesce with the religious ones on both sides. Consider, for example, the Christian (particularly, of the non-Catholic groups) nostalgia for an era when they felt very secure since the masters of this country were Christians, their present economic backwardness and desire for upward mobility through education and institution-building and their anxiety about the survival and identity in a predominantly non-Christian society. Adapting the observation of Kakar about the Muslim community, it may be said that "to be swamped by the surrounding Hindu culture has been historically the greatest fear of the Indian" Christian.[8] The fear is increased when the

---

[8] Kakar, *The Colours of Violence*, 251.

Hindu nationalists ask minority communities to renounce their cultural identity and to conform. It is this fear of assimilation that forces minorities to seek shelter under 'minority rights' or in extreme cases, under religious fundamentalism or fanaticism. On the part of the Hindus, the longing to assert their numerical domination, their feeling of superiority on account of antiquity and indigenousness, the suspicion about the Christian community's Indian identity, their dislike of the latter's cultural distinctiveness particularly in the North, which is seen as a hindrance to the total indianization of the society, the feeling of discomfort about the obvious efficiency of a centralized group like the Christian community in institution-building and the dislike of the constitutional guarantee of minority rights are some of the more discernible interests. These multiple interests on both sides encourage and sometimes overwhelm the members to exercise power over each other. It may be triggered by any event that smacks of power – rumours about conversion, refusal of admission in an educational institution, expressions of community power such as festivals, prayer meetings, etc. Each instance of such power play, including physical power manifested in violence, aggravates the situation and intensifies the divisive force as the victim of power wants to recapture his lost position while the agents of power try to consolidate or enhance the position already attained.

In this example, group violence, including terrorist attacks, have been carried out by the Hindu groups as a means of injecting fear in the small Christian communities and stop them from continuing what they do, whether it is evangelization or education, or even maintaining a distinct lifestyle. The counter-attacks from the part of the Christians, if at all there have been, are often a show of defiance and unity rather than an attempt to frighten the attackers.

In the first two illustrations given above, terrorism is a product of exploitation and victimization. But, that need not always be the case. Though most of the terrorist activities do emerge from a perception of injustice, ideological interests can also be causes for terrorism. The commitment to an ideology and the desire for asserting a group's identity through the ideology, particularly when it is opposed by the authorities can be reasons for terrorism, even if there is no serious victimization. The third example above is a good illustration of the ideological origin of violence and terrorism. The struggle and terrorist activities that demanded the imposition of Islamic states in Iran and Afghanistan or struggle for democracy in some authoritarian states, etc., can also be cited as instances of ideological terrorism. It is said that terrorism functions like an economic market. There is demand for terrorists placed by greed or grievances. Supply is driven by relative deprivation resulting in some kind of deficits, maybe developmental, ideological, or dignity-linked. Act of terror takes place at the point of intersection between the supply and demand.

3.4. Violence and Legitimacy

Before concluding this section, I think, the question of legitimacy of violence must be addressed. Violence destroys or injures life; hence, violence in any form is offensive. However, modern society confers legitimacy to some kinds of violence, mostly violence in conventional warfare, for which decision is normally taken by legitimate governments or authorities. In a world in which power is unequally distributed and several kinds of interests can be camouflaged in reasons that can be sold as apparently legitimate, approval by a government or an authority often can and do turn out to be just a legal cover-up. In a situation in which the economic, political and social interests of the dominant groups or countries go on exploiting the victims and the latter cannot defeat the powerful and stop the exploitation through conventional warfare, what other means the victims have than employing unconventional means or just continuing to suffer at the hands of the exploiters! We know that persons like Gandhi and Martin Luther King were committed to using only non-violent means to convert the exploiters. Is that the only recourse to people under exploitation? Is exploitation by which millions are thrown into poverty, malnutrition, etc., itself not a kind of silent violence? Is not violence needed sometimes to control and contain violence? In that situation, is violence justifiable or legitimate? Law today considers such violence as illegitimate; from a spiritual point of view, it is not commendable too. Sociologically, however, as an attempt to end a greater evil of disorganization and even destruction of groups and communities, such violence against violence appears to be a legitimate means of social transformation and reorganization under a more just order.

Of course, the term 'terrorism' as an extreme form of violence is always used as a pejorative term. It is a word with intrinsically negative connotations, which is generally applied to only one's enemies and opponents. Yet, Brian Jenkins notes: "What is called terrorism seems to depend on one's point of view. Use of the term implies a moral judgement; and if one party can successfully attach the label 'terrorist' to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral viewpoint."[9] Hence, the decision to call someone 'terrorist' becomes almost unavoidably subjective, depending largely on whether one sympathizes with or opposes the person/group/cause concerned. If one identifies with the perpetrator of the original injustice, then the act is terrorism. If, however, one identifies with the victim, the violent act is regarded in a more sympathetic light; and it may be a struggle for liberation or justice. In other words, 'one man's terrorist can be another man's freedom fighter'. The American President Ronald Reagan once called the Afghan Mujahideen 'freedom fighters' during their war against the Soviet Union; yet, twenty years later, when a new generation of Afghan men began to fight against what they perceived to be a regime installed by foreign powers (western powers), their attacks were labelled terrorism by George W. Bush. Both Menachem Begin and Nelson Mandela were branded as terrorists by western governments when they were involved in a liberation struggle for their countries (Israel and South Africa, respectively), but these same persons, as leaders of the liberated nations, were called statesmen by the same governments.

4. Conflict within Religion

Till now, we were examining the conflict that arises between religious groups or between a religious group and government/authority. What is the nature of conflict that sometimes occurs within a religious community? The dynamics operating in inter-religious conflicts can be found in the intra-religious conflicts too; and such conflicts are not rare within each religion. Even though they may not usually degenerate into terrorist activities, they can cause considerable destabilisation in religious communities as well as to larger societies. How do they begin? Almost all religious associations are charismatic in origin; they are formed as bands of a few loyal disciples devoted to one charismatic leader or founder who preaches a new religious message. Charisma, from a sociological point of view, is the endowment of supernatural, superhuman, or, at least, specifically exceptional qualities in a person that attract and appeal to the interests of people who come into contact with the person.[10] The people who are attracted to the person become devoted to him and later join him as his disciples. At this stage, the personal charisma of the leader alone is the binding force that keeps the group together; such a control is accepted as legitimate by the devoted followers.

---

[9] Cited in Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*, Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1998, 32.

[10] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 218-220, 241-242.

But after the disappearance of the original charisma, there arises the need for a continued authority to keep the religious association united. It is then what is known as the routinization of charisma takes place. According to Max Weber, the social context which necessitates the routinization is the threat of disintegration that the charismatic domination faces as soon as it is exposed to the everyday demands of the normal times after the disappearance of the original charismatic leader. There arises a feeling of insecurity among the followers about the unstable nature of the charismatic domination. Besides, as the group grows in size, the functions of the group become differentiated both qualitatively and quantitatively, and as the original charisma has disappeared, it becomes difficult to exercise control personally and spontaneously over the enlarged and differentiated group. So, the group feels the need for the habitual manifestation of charisma for the continued activation of the community, even when charisma is not spontaneously forthcoming. The only way this need can be securely fulfilled is to let the charisma manifest and be distributed according to some fixed procedures.[11] One who goes through certain established procedures and takes over the office is considered to have received charisma. Thus, the spontaneous appearance of charisma is replaced by a systematic manifestation of routinized charisma. The institutionalized procedures are at first accepted on the strength of tradition. Later on, rationally systematized rules are legally laid down; a rationally oriented officialdom is also organized. Thus, finally a rationally and legally legitimized bureaucratic authority comes into existence.

The process of routinization, however, is not as harmonious as it appears to be. Group interests play a significant role in shaping the emerging structure. Max Weber has found that economic power and status interests are the most prominent among them, even though non-material or spiritual interests may also exercise influence.[12] Both collective goals and group interests manage to coexist in the structure in the beginning; but, slowly the latter begin to replace the common interests. Emergence of interest groups within or together with the positions of power reinforces and concentrates power in a few positions, enhancing the vertical stratification of the organization and increasing the marginalization of those who have no power. Naturally, this awakens and fosters the interest of the 'have-nots' to gain power. These interests are given expression to in the form of new values and norms. The emergence of such interests and values causes conflict and tension between the power-holders and the subordinates. Consequently, the legitimacy of the existing order is challenged; polarisation and even confrontation between those who hold old values and those who advocate new values take place. The divisions within religious organizations and the formation of new sects or groups that follow such divisions can be explained in terms of the twin process of routinization and stratification. The tension, finally, gets resolved through the emergence new patterns of authority which represent or accommodate the interests of those who challenged the existing authority. If the organization is highly bureaucratic, the tension and conflict may give rise to new charisma. As A. Etzioni remarks, "after long periods of routinization, especially of centralization and deterioration, an organization like a society needs a charismatic leader to revitalize it by introducing major innovations."[13] This charisma is viewed as the effect of 'the discontent-producing constellation of the organization'.[14] To this creative and charisma-producing aspect of the conflict we shall return later.

---

[11] Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*, New York, NY: Anchor, 1962, 305.

[12] Weber, *Economy and Society*, 254. Also see, S. M. Eisenstadt, ed., *Max Weber on Charisma and Institution Building*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968, ix-lvi.

Regarding the conflicts and the consequent divisions in a religious organization it may, thus, be said that they are not accidental but the gradual outcome of a social process. They are not completely destructive either; but are productive of vitality since the conflict and the consequent emergence of new charisma prevent the ossification of the social system by exerting pressure for innovation and creativity.[15] Otto Maduro, in his book *Religion and Social Conflicts*, speaks about this process in the following words:

---

[13] A. Etzioni, *A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations*, New York, NY: Free Press, 1961, 228.

[14] W. Stark, *The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom*, New York, NY: Fordham University, 1967, 46.

[15] L. Coser, "Social Conflict and the Theory of Social Change" in *Social Change*, ed. A. Etzioni and E. Etzioni-Halevy, New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973, 114.

> The positioning of a body of functionaries specifically charged with satisfying the religious interests of certain social groups by the production of a certain type of teachings and practices – or more briefly, the specialization of religious work – issues from a conflict process... In this struggle, the emergent group interested in monopolizing religious production will have a tendency to dispossess the community of its means of religious production... If this dispossession or expropriation does not succeed in overcoming the resistance of the community concerned, the result of the struggle can range from the elimination of the emergent group to its survival as a minority religious sect within the community.[16]

Now, let me illustrate this second type of conflicts religion produces, i.e., conflicts within a religious organization, with an example from the history of Indian Christianity. The community of the Christians in Kerala, who trace their origin from the time of St. Thomas the Apostle, is known as St. Thomas Christian Community. This community was first split into two in the middle of the seventeenth century and later into more groups or denominations. If one examines closely the events in the history of this community from the time of the arrival of the Portuguese in India up to its division after a revolt that is known as the 'Coonan Cross Oath', it can clearly be seen that the division which occurred with the oath and which continues to exist to this day was the culmination of a protracted power tussle among the leaders of the two opposing groups. By the sixteenth century, the partly traditional and partly bureaucratic structure of the Church in India had developed sufficient room for the satisfaction of the power interests of its leaders through the offices of the archdeacon and the *yōgam* (the assembly of parish representatives). The archdeacon, who was a priest, was the executive head and the *yōgam*, the decision-making body in all temporal matters concerning the church; the bishops who used to come from Persia acted as spiritual leaders and did not interfere in the temporal affairs.[17] The Portuguese ecclesiastical authorities began to interfere in the religious and social affairs of the local Christians soon after their arrival even during the time of Mar Abraham, the last Chaldean bishop in Kerala and such interference reached its zenith with the Synod of Diamper in 1599 in which they, against the will of the community, introduced very sweeping changes in cultic rituals, social customs, and even in the organizational affiliation.[18] While the Portuguese usurped power, they made sure that their military would interfere in case of any resistance and the local kings would remain neutral. Even such autocratic interference did not create any serious danger of conflict even though there was widespread dislike and aversion to the changes. But more than fifty years later (1650), the same community rose against the foreigners and eventually broke up from them just when the power interests of the traditional leaders clashed with those of the usurpers. When Archbishop Garcia, who was then ruling the community, stripped the archdeacon of his powers once and for all and practically reduced the *yōgam* to a mere consultative body, none could prevent the division. The same kind of interests continued to hinder the reunion even when there were several chances for it later.[19]

---

[16] See Otto Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, New York, NY: Orbis Books, 1979, 89-90. Also see, Harry M. Johnson, *Sociology*, New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1983, 425 ff.

[17] See J. Kuriedath, *Authority in the Catholic Community in Kerala*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1989, 84-97.

Though we may not be able to discover the technologically advanced modern acts of terrorism in this conflict, its seeds can be found in the chain of events. The incident that triggered the open revolt was the spread of a rumour that a bishop who happened to arrive at Cochin from Persia to take over the administration of the Christians again was drowned by the Jesuits off the port. The rumoured act was similar to a terrorist act of modern times, the intention being the creation of terror among the local Christians and their submission to the Portuguese ecclesiastical authority. The Christians, on the other hand, did not or could not engage in any violent activity but collectively resorted to open revolt.

5. Institutional Religion and Conflict

As noted in the beginning, an institution is simply a standardized mode of behaviour; a religious institution is a set of accepted patterns of religious behaviour.[20] The second question that we posed in the beginning of the article was whether religion as an institution, apart from being an association, has had any divisive role in history. It must be conceded that it is extremely difficult to separate the institutional aspect of religion from the associational with regard to any given historical incident of conflict; we can make the distinction only for the sake of conceptual clarity. Even when we examined the divisive function (dysfunction?) of religion, as an association, the conflict was shown to arise from certain ways of behaviour influenced by sectarian interests of the members. According to conflict theorists, almost all institutions in the long run are manifestations of the ruling class interests. Hence the question, how to distinguish institutional factors from the associational, is a tricky one.

---

[18] The community that was affiliated to the Persian Patriarch through the bishops who came periodically from there was forcibly brought under the direct control of the Portuguese bishop.

[19] Kuriedath, *Authority in the Catholic Community in Kerala*, 105-142.

[20] Kuriedath, *Authority in the Catholic Community in Kerala*, 108.

In every religion there is an aspect of 'given-ness' or there are elements that come from outside human sources, something beyond the human interests and goals or something that cannot be reduced to human endeavours. In reality, of course, these elements are not translated into ways of behaviour without the active involvement of human responses and their interests that will seep into the responses. However, for analytical purpose, let us assume that they are received uncontaminated and examine their role in the unity and disunity, or organization and disorganization of the human society.

These given or revealed elements are expressed through the three important aspects of religion that I indicated in the beginning, namely, creed, cult, and code. According to the official tenets of many world religions, there are irreducible differences in their creeds and cultic practices, the core elements of which are claimed to originate from the divine source itself. (The role of code will be discussed later). Can they or do they operate as divisive factors? If so, why?

From a theological point of view, God cannot be the source of any division.[21] Hence, some theologians tend to accept a gradation in the authenticity and fullness of these creed and cult elements in different religious traditions and attribute the divisive effect, if any, to the inadequate understanding and acceptance on the part of the others, of this objective gradation and theological convergence. Once the divisive role is, thus, shifted to the subjective side (inadequate understanding and acceptance), it is comparatively easy to reduce it to the associational factors like interests, ignorance, etc.

---

[21] The concepts of election and exclusive revelation of God that the people of Israel claimed may have been the original source of many a conflict with other religions in the Judeo-Christian tradition. These concepts, as they were practised, appear to have been influenced by the usual ethnocentric attitude that is found in most tribal societies and the ignorance of geography that limited their idea of world to the land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. The holy wars waged by Israel against the nations and their gods, the hatred and antipathy practised by them against the gentiles, the criticism of idolatry – all were claimed to have been approved by God due to the ethnocentric understanding of divine selection.

But, even objectively speaking and without having recourse to any concept of gradation, it can be stated that, from a sociological point of view, plurality of religious faiths and cults need not be a divisive factor, as the plurality of marriage customs, family types, political systems, etc., are not so and do co-exist in society. Plurality in itself is not divisive; on the contrary, it can be unifying in the sense that it brings out the different aspects of a social phenomenon more clearly and elaborately, and helps the people to appreciate the total richness and varied dimensions of the phenomenon. Basically, it is the cultural diversity of man that accounts for the multiplicity of religious heritages; rays of God's revelation received in and by different cultural contexts shaped the formation of different religions. Like other cultural differences that are accepted with equal dignity and honour, religious faiths and cultic practices can be appreciated without generating conflict; the multiplicity of the rites (churches *sui juris*) within the Catholic Church is an example of this type of non-divisive plurality, at least in theory.[22]

The moment people fail to appreciate the richness in variety and begin to attribute to one or another religious tradition an exclusive and overriding claim for survival or propagation even through the exercise of control over the others, human interests come into the picture and begin their power-play. For, even the doctrines of uniqueness, universal mission, fullness of revelation, etc., claimed by some religions including the Catholic Church, if such ideas are of divine origin, cannot demand the promotion of those claims by infringing on the freedom of conscience of others; in other words, the divine interest which seeks the unity and peace of all human beings can demand the propagation of his message only without exercising power over others and without creating conflicts in the society.[23]

---

[22] The Catholic Church is considered to be a communion of twenty-one autonomous churches, of which twenty are called Eastern Churches due to their origin in the eastern part of the erstwhile Roman Empire and one is the Roman (Latin) Church which is the largest of all. Though all the Churches together are under the authority of the Pope, each church has its own autonomous head, a Patriarch or a Major Archbishop.

The use of power or control over others by curtailing or containing other people's freedom is definitely of human interest, not divine. The above noted exclusivist world views shaped with the help of human interests have given rise to intolerance and prejudice towards other religious groups, and encouraged the exercise of power over others, which in turn has created conflict situations.

6. Religion as a Meaning System[24]

6.1. Religious Vision: Radical Potential for Unity

I shall try to explain the points of this section by taking Christianity as an example. Christianity, like other religions, teaches that God loves all and never wishes the destruction of some for the sake of others (Mt. 18:14). The picture of God that Jesus presented before his followers is of a Father who loves both the elder and the younger sons equally (Lk. 15:11-31), of a farmer who gives the same remuneration at the end of the day to those who came to work at different times (Mt. 20:1-16) and of a shepherd who treats the lost sheep and the ninety-nine equally (Lk. 15:1-7). In the Kingdom of God that Jesus envisaged there is no inequality between the rich and the poor, the first and the last, the mighty and the weak, the male and the female, and so on (Gal. 3:28). All are equal in dignity as the children of God. In order to establish this equal dignity, it would appear that God loves the weak and the poor more than the strong and the rich. Jesus showed this special concern of God for the poor and the weak through his special fellowship with the marginalized in the society and his teachings that clearly indicated why God has a preferential option for the poor (Mt. 5:3; Lk. 16:19-31). Thus, Jesus through his words and deeds indicated that God is ready to demolish the divisions and bring about unity and peace in human society. The gospel message of the Kingdom of God as preached by Jesus was a call for unity as children of God without the limitations of the religious borders. Peace (*shalom*) was the identifying characteristic of the Kingdom of God (Jn. 14:27). Thus, the message of Jesus was totally opposed to any type of division in the society; what he taught was the universality of God's love and salvation. In the light of Jesus' message, the uniqueness of Christianity does not consist in its exclusiveness as a religious system and the claim for superiority over other religions, rather in its capacity to transcend the categories of historically determined religious traditions and in its broad-based approach to all other religions through which it can teach the universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of the humankind, where there is no kind of discrimination.

---

[23] The evolution of the idea of the uniqueness of Christianity and its universal mission of salvation may be examined elaborately from a historico-theological point of view; however, the limitations of this paper do not allow us to undertake such an examination. What I have indicated above is that, even with such claims of uniqueness and universality, conflict need not arise if one understands the above claims properly. The nature of the religious mission of Christianity will be more elaborately explained below when we deal with 'Christianity as a Meaning System'.

[24] Even though the Marxist reductionism has tried to explain away all meaning systems as superstructures propped up by the economic system, few modern sociologists accept this analysis fully. In fact, Max Weber's *Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism* is a bold attempt to turn Marx upside down and to prove the influence of meaning system on organizational systems.

Hence, the first disciples of Jesus called themselves as followers of the 'Way' and did not try for some time to become a distinct association or develop a separate institution. Christianity is presented in the *Acts of the Apostles* as the 'Way' (Acts 18:25), namely, as a way of life rather than a system like Judaism. The decision regarding the abolition of circumcision (Acts 11:1 ff) and the Cornelius story (10:9 ff), in which Peter is asked to eat the flesh of all kinds of animals (indicating the fact that before God there is no distinction of the ritually clean and unclean), both described in the *Acts*, show the universal or transcendent nature of the new way of life. It was only later that those who responded to that call developed clear boundaries for their group and made it a clearly marked organization with distinct creed, cult, and code. Ignoring the teachings of Jesus, his followers began to theologize the Judaic claims and treat other religions negatively. It began with St. Paul, though he himself was an important instrument in helping the new movement transcend the Jewish boundaries. Paul speaks about the Gentiles as "offering sacrifices to demons and not God" (1 Cor. 10:20-21) and brands the entire Gentile world as immersed in idolatry and immorality (Rom. 1:18-32). Paul characterized his parent religion as one displeasing to God and hostile to all humankind, filling up their quota of sins and bringing down the wrath of God upon it (1 Thes. 2:14-16). By negatively assessing Judaism as well as the then existing Roman religions and positively shaping a distinct theological and institutional identity for Christianity, Paul laid the foundations for institutional Christianity. Many Fathers followed Paul and, on the one hand, treated other religions negatively and, on the other, completed the institutionalization of Christianity. Once fully institutionalized like Judaism, the claim of universality and exclusiveness became a source of division due to the church's close association with the powerful Roman political system. The history of Christianity is a paradigm case of the influence of material as well as non-material institutional interests routinizing the original charisma and transforming the 'Way' into a church.

We began the last section, examining the role of institutional Christianity in conflicts; however, towards the end, our analysis brought us to the third aspect of religion, namely, religion as a meaning system. Besides insisting on stipulated behaviour patterns, religion imparts a specific vision about the various aspects of human life through its creeds or doctrines. As already noted, the vision Christianity (and other religions as well) provides regarding human relations is one of unity, love, and peace. So, if human interpreters can detach themselves from the power-generating institutional and associational interests and begin to live and spread the vision of unity and peace given by the divine revelation, it would function as the source or root of human unity. Since both associations and institutions are self-perpetuating, they have a drive for growth and permanence. Hence, they have to promote their vested interests and are, therefore, unable to foster unity wholeheartedly. But, persons who have transcended such interests have been able to preach and promote unity beyond the borders of organizational religions. So, any discussion of the potential for the resolution of conflicts and promotion of unity by religions must start from a search for such a potential in charismatic persons who can rise above man-made boundaries, not just for purely institutional initiatives.

6.2. From Vision to Values: Unity as well as Conflicts

This religious vision, least contaminated by associational or institutional interests, is the radical potential for nurturing unity. However, religions translate their vision into practical life through religious values; and religious norms are the external and concrete guidelines for living such values, which religions want to inculcate in their followers. Internally through socialization and externally through the imposition of norms with sanctions, such values are transmitted and assimilated by people. In society, the primary function of values is social control, i.e., keeping the members of the society united through shared meaning of life and goals.

Hence, norms by nature are unifying, not divisive. But there are different kinds of norms, as there are different kinds of values which may be broadly grouped into two: primary values and secondary values. Primary values or core values are so fundamental and central to human life that they are the same in any place and at any time. Justice, peace, love, etc., in their generic form are primary values. At the level of these values, there is a sort of basic or fundamental unity among all religions. However, the secondary and other more peripheral values, which are mostly the concretization of primary values into various given cultural situations, often mark one set of religious followers distinct from the others. Such differences in secondary and peripheral values also need not be conflict-generating or divisive, as in the case of creeds and cults.

However, that is not the case in reality: secondary values and norms derived from them often do create divisions and conflicts. For, they often provide distorted or adulterated world-views on account of the interplay of human interests. In translating the primary values into concrete secondary values and norms, group interests begin to coalesce and exercise their power. The religious leaders who often have vested interests in perpetuating the economic, social, and political interests of the dominant groups in the society, since they themselves belong to such groups, shape those values and norms, and cultivate a world-view that will safeguard their interests. In other words, they would reconstruct their religious experience and perceive its values in accord with the interests of their own classes.[25] A clergy in mutual identification with the dominant classes and indebted to them, will tend to exclude, disqualify, and desacralize any teachings and practices, religious or not, that appear to be opposed to the interests of the dominant classes. Thus, the religious leaders, sometimes even without knowing, become instruments in restructuring the religious system, which tends to create a hushed consent to the established dominance and a simultaneous rejection of opposition to such dominance.[26] Here religion joins hands with some of the existing conflict groups in a society and reinforces the divisions by providing a justification or rationale that helps the dominant groups.

Some examples of attempts at such restructuring will be illustrative: religious discourses couched in terms that are innocuous and foreign to the basic problems of a hierarchically stratified society, doctrines that accept and even defend the prevailing social divisions as something beyond questioning, teachings that deny the existence or importance of conflicts between the dominant and dominated classes, or pronouncements that question or even deny the legitimacy of a struggle against social divisions.[27] The teachings of the Christian Church on various aspects of economic, social, and political life from the time of Emperor Constantine through the Middle Ages, which justified and defended most of the then existing social divisions and stratifications, like feudalism and monarchy, are good examples of justification of dominant interests. Even though the primary value of justice in general is an attractive ideal of life, justice as concretely interpreted in different parts of the world from time to time has been influenced by dominant interests of the society. Similarly, the primary value of equality is the foundation of human dignity; still, in translating this value into practice, most religions have perpetuated centuries-old gender discrimination. As Rudolf Heredia says, "the theologies of suffering have always appealed to the victims, just as the religious justification of aggression has ruled the conscience of the victors."[28] Such a theology places the responsibility squarely on the victims themselves or their gods, rather than on the perpetrators of violence. In such situations, religion, as the Marxists complain, becomes a tool to provide the ruling class ideology. Obviously, then, religion becomes a force that reinforces and perpetuates the already existing divisions.

---

[25] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 126.

[26] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 126.

6.3. Through Creative Conflict to Unity

Religion has also been and still is a divisive force in another, much more constructive sense. As I mentioned above, values (secondary) and their normative applications undergo changes due to change in perceptions. (The primary values and norms seem to originate from a divine source beyond the influential field of human interests and, hence, transcend changes due to the changes in time and place). Change of values is never uniform or simultaneous in every stratum of society. Those who enjoy the benefits of the currently prevalent values will be reluctant to give up those values and accept new values. As kings and emperors were slow to accept the values of democracy, so the Brahmins were and are still reluctant to imbibe the value of a casteless and egalitarian society. It is often through charismatic leaders that the old values are challenged and new values are presented. These charismatic leaders and the religious group which follows them usually call for the implementation of new and progressive values far ahead of the institutional leaders. This prophetic role of religion, although manifested only occasionally, can and does generate conflict in society. But this kind of conflict generates enough creative force also not only to reform the existing societal structure but even to heal the consequent division and disorganization. In other words, even though the process is anti-institutional and divisive, it is not unhealthy or detrimental; on the contrary, it is revitalizing. From the divisiveness emerges the creativity of a new and progressive society. The conflicts and divisions the creative and prophetic interventions of the founders of important world religions have caused in the society fall in this category.

---

[27] Maduro, *Religion and Social Conflicts*, 127.

[28] Rudolf C. Heredia, "Collective Violence and Reconciliation" in J. Chathanatt and M. N. Thakur, eds., *Wounded History: Religion, Conflict, Psyche and Social Healing*, Delhi: Media House, 2006, 64.

The impact of such types of conflicts often goes beyond the boundaries of religious organizations and challenges the values prevalent in the larger society too. History shows that religions have challenged the values and norms of the society and called for a more just reorganization. The religion of Moses challenging the obscurantist and polytheistic beliefs around them, the early Christianity challenging the apotheosisation of the emperor, and Islam liberating the Arabs from unenlightened tribal beliefs and magical cults are some of the examples from religious history. These conflicts are creative. From such creative conflicts can emerge a higher level of unity and cohesion in the society. The fact that the society has not been able to heal some of such divisions through its dialectical progress perhaps indicates the presence of purely human, sectarian interests also.

7. Conclusion

The above analysis, we believe, has brought out the divisive as well as reconciling potential of religion. It has also pointed out how closely the conflict-generating human interests and unifying divine interests function together in religions. Moreover, it was noted that the line which distinguishes the institution from the association and the superhuman elements from the human in the institutional structures of religion is very thin. That is probably why in the case of religion no division is totally divisive and no unity is fully unifying. Religion, being both divine and human in origin, has always and will always be a force that unifies as well as divides, organizes as well as disorganizes the human society.

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 47-60

TERRORISM AND GLOBAL RESPONSE-ABILITY

Brad Bannon◆

1. Introduction

It was a Tuesday morning much like any other. I was printing and collating the annual budgetary report to distribute to my church congregation which I was to carry to the church staff meeting on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. The television was turned on, but the sound was muted. I gazed at the screen to see an astonishing image: the World Trade Center was ablaze. My first response was fear. Just a year earlier, I was a financial executive working on the 73rd floor of Tower Two and many of my former colleagues and friends were still working there. I noticed the radio tower through the smoke and flames and relaxed slightly – the fire was in Tower One. My friends must be OK. I turned the sound on and watched as the day unfolded in tragedy. Just an hour later, Tower Two collapsed. There could be no word to describe my emotion other than *terror*. The emotion did not subside for weeks. Somehow, all of my friends escaped from the 73rd floor. Others were not so fortunate. My best friend lost his cousin; a parishioner lost 40 friends and employees; our local fire station lost 90% of its staff.

Much of the emotion, in my opinion, is lost in the word *terror-ism*, which seems to objectify the emotion in a way that is all too academic. The theme for this issue of the Journal of Dharma is *Terrorism and Global Responsibility*. Well before 11 September 2001, but particularly after the events of that day, the global community has been somewhat entrenched in an atmosphere attuned by terrorism. I have chosen to begin this article, therefore, with this more personal recollection of that dark day in an attempt to overcome this objectification and make the word *terror*-ism somewhat more real. If we are to discuss global response and global responsibility, then we must not lose sight of the fact that the object of our response is an emotion: terror.

◆**Brad Bannon**, a US citizen, is currently a graduate student at Dharmaram Vidyā Kshetram, Bangalore. His first book, *The Quest for a Postmodern Ethic: A Phenomenological Comparison of Martin Heidegger and Sri Aurobindo Ghose*, will be published later this year.

But what of that other aspect of this journal's theme: Global responsibility? We run the risk, here, of linking these terms too closely by turning three words into two. What is the *ability* of the *globe* to *respond* at all? Do we have the kind of global community and global connection necessary to *respond* in a way that could be labelled *Global Response-ability*? It seems to me that this question is fundamentally necessary prior to any specific elucidation of a possible global response to terror-ism. Further, what about the linking together of terror and response? Formulated in this way (as a response to an emotional response), what possibilities are there? Can terror be responded *to* in any way that is not *terrified* or *terrorizing* or *terr(or)ific*? Can emotion somehow be removed from the equation? If this were possible, then would the re-action still be considered a 'response'? From this perspective, the theme of this journal is an effort to dis-cover our ability to respond as a global 'community' to the emotion of terror propagated by actions specifically intended to cause terror. This article seeks to examine these possible responses and, in doing so, cannot escape some comparison to the re-action (I do not think we can call it a 'response') to the events of 11/9/01 and those that have followed in Spain, London, Paris, Mumbai, Israel, Lebanon, Sudan, Iraq, and, most recently, in Hyderabad.

Let us consider the first question. What is the *ability* of the *globe* to respond at all? For the last 30 years, at least, we have often thrown around words like *global village*, *global community*, inter-national, and multi-lateral. But the pervasive use of such terminology does not mean that they actually exist. Of course, we have the United Nations, but this organization functions with great difficulty, if we can say that it functions much at all (humanitarian efforts aside). There was some measure of a global response to the tsunami in 2004 and somewhat less of one to the earthquake in Pakistan in 2005, but these responses were not so much unified as they were simultaneous.

So, if we are to discuss a global response, what might we imagine that would look like? I find myself unable to answer this question. The most obvious retort would seem to be the United Nations, but even this name indicates a unified entity of extant and separate nations. It is still a far cry from any kind of cosmopolitanism that would seem to be necessary to fit the term *global response-ability* and, even less, *global responsibility*.

2. The Collapse of the ἰδέα of 'Nation'

The inherent problem here is one of conception. The Platonic *idea* (ἰδέα or εἰδος) is one that seems to have run its course and is in need of abandonment. Our struggle to identify (or even imagine) a *global response* fails because the very concept of *idea* has failed us. Does not the *idea* of 'nation' objectify the citizens *of* that nation? Have we not imagined an entity with an existence all its own, of which we, as citizens, barely register as members? We say things like 'The USA has done this' or 'England has done that' or 'India's response was…'. The *idea* of 'nation' has become a monolithic entity which quashes the individuality of the very persons of which that 'idea' consists. For example, how might 'I' place myself with regard to the *national response* by the US to the terrorizing effects and affects of 11/9/01? Certainly, I shared in the emotional response of terror, but what of the 'national' re-action to invade Afghanistan and Iraq?

As a US Citizen, I neither agreed nor supported either re-action. I was not alone. My church, reeling from the loss of parishioners and friends who died on that day actively and loudly protested against the military action in both nations. One of my friends, a mother of two and daughter of a former US ambassador to Afghanistan, returned to the country where she grew up to serve as a human shield and a journalist to recount the atrocities en-acted in that re-action. The state of Vermont, which has the highest number of soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan per-capita, also has the most active secessionist movement of any state. Thomas N. Naylor, a leader in the association, explains that one reason for this movement is that, "The U.S. Government has lost its moral authority."[1]

These are but a few examples of how the term 'national response' fails when we examine the lives of real individuals within those 'nations'. The problem, once again, is the Platonic *ideal*. The idea (ἰδέα) of 'nation' does not exist. People (citizens) do. People respond and re-act quite differently from one another. Their *ability* to respond (personal response-ability) is fundamentally different because people are fundamentally different from one another. Because persons have different abilities to respond, they have different responsibilities. A person is not simply 'one of a people' because 'people' is a collection of persons. To define a 'citizen of the US' as one who is a member of the US 'nation' is specious reasoning. The US 'nation' consists of US citizens. Citizen must be defined first. The converse cannot be true. Once again, the Platonic 'idea' and the Kantian 'subject' collapse because they either objectify or subjectify what is most unique, most essential, and most Real: the person. The responsibilities of a people eclipse the responsibilities of persons because the commitment to the ἰδέα of 'nation' has eclipsed the commitment to persons. By attributing 'reality' to 'nation', we have lost the reality of 'citizen'. At the very least, we have made 'nation' *more real* than 'citizen' with generalizations like 'most USAmericans', 'most Indians' or, worse still, 'most Westerners'.[2] So long as ἰδέα reigns supreme, depersonalized persons are its subjects.

---

[1] Naylor, Thomas H., "Secession: A Radical Act of Rebellion against the Empire," *http://www.vermontrepublic.org* (21 May 2007), Article 3.

With this de-construction of the concept of 'nation' in mind, how might we then conceive of 'nation' more inceptually in order to come to some understanding of 'united nations' or 'global community', which is one third of our theme here? A nation, it would seem, is not simply a collection of persons in a geographical region. Neither is it a group of persons unified by some history or ethnography which inevitably starts at some rather arbitrary point in time. If we are to remain thematically connected to that which is most real (the person), then we must define 'nation' inceptually as 'persons in dialogue'. It is in dialogue that these individual persons find their unity – even in their stark disagreement. What makes a nation truly unified is not that they all agree, but that they continue to remain committed to dialogue with and against one another in their agreement and disagreement.

Above, I offered the example of Thomas Naylor and the Vermont Republic movement. In many ways, this is an exception that proves my point. The Vermont secessionists desire to secede from the United States precisely because they feel a lack of desire, or perhaps a lack of effectiveness, in the commitment to dialogue with the federal government. They feel that their voice is not heard in the dialogue. What holds the ἰδέα of 'nation' together, if such an ἰδέα exists at all, is a commitment to dialogue. Given this, Plato's ἰδέα of 'Republic' does not exist. What does exist is human persons committed to dialogue with one another both in agreement and disagreement. Only within this inceptual understanding of 'nation' can we conceive of anything like a 'Global Response'.

---

[2] Consider, for example, the common use of the word 'American' which tends to refer only to the United States and forgets that Brazilians, Venezuelans, Mexicans, and many others who are also 'American'. This is why I prefer the term 'USAmerican' which merely objectifies the citizens of the US without obviating all other 'Americans'.

3. The Cosmopolitan Quest

We now return to our quest to imagine a 'global community' or 'cosmopolitanism'. If we understand 'nation' as 'persons committed to dialogue', then we can quite easily extend this definition and apply it to 'global community' because 'nation', thus defined, is devoid of geographical boundary. In fact, the two are not at all different. Citizens of a 'nation' often disagree and *never* fully agree, but they are still citizens *of a nation* because they remain committed to dialogue with and against other citizens. A cosmopolitan would then be a person who is committed to dialogue with other cosmopolitans. Patriotism, thus, would not be defined as loyalty to a 'nation' (understood as an extant Platonic ἰδέα), but instead would be defined as loyalty to dialogue with other citizens. In no way does this mean that cosmopolitans agree with one another; nor does it mean that we agree to disagree. Agreeing to disagree is tantamount to agreeing not to dialogue. It is an end to dialogue. Quite to the contrary, we agree to dialogue and agree to continue to dialogue, despite whether we disagree *or* agree. Our 'unity', then, is not tied to our agreement, but to our commitment to dialogue. Therefore, we might identify 'global community' simply as that collection of cosmopolitan persons who are committed to dialogue.

How do we understand the word 'response'? The word itself indicates dialogue. It is a dialogue which is *about* something which has been said or done. It is an answer or a reply. The word derives from the Latin *respondeo*, which means "to answer to; to meet, agree, accord, or correspond with."[3] More originarily, though, we find it as the reflexive form of *spondeo*, which means "promise solemnly, to bind or pledge one's self."[4] A re-sponse, therefore, is a covenant to dialogue. It is a reciprocal ‘pledging oneself’ to the Other in dialogue. ‘Other’, therefore, ceases to be ‘Other’ and becomes ‘you’ and ‘Thou’.

---

[3] *A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary: Revised, Enlarged, and in Great Part Rewritten* (1879 Clarendon Edition), s.v. "*respondeo.*"

[4] *A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary*, s.v. "*spondeo.*"

There can be no way to justify the use of violence (bullets, bombs, and missiles) under the term ‘re-sponse’. These are re-actions, not re-sponses. Re-acting is diametrically opposed to responding. It is in no way a *speaking* or *dialoguing*, but an *acting*, and, in fact, a re-acting (which is far less original than acting-as-such). ‘Global response’, therefore, indicates a pledge or commitment to dialogue. It presumes a ‘global dialogue’ in which to respond and such a global dialogue requires a global commitment to dialogue and, therefore, cosmopolitanism. By adding the word ‘global’ to ‘response’, we signify not just a pledge to dialogue, but a *correspondence* (co-re-spondeo), a reciprocal-pledging-together: a covenant to dialogue.

Subsequent to the inceptual understanding of ‘nation’, there is also a need for an inceptual understanding of ‘person’ and identity. A ‘person’ can no longer be thought of in concepts or ideas in the manner of Plato. If we attempt to ‘identify’ a person in terms of categories, such as ‘USAmerican’, ‘Christian’, ‘Indian’, ‘Hindu’, or ‘Muslim’, then we prioritize these ideas (ἰδέαι) over and against the person who is said to ‘conform’ to these ideas, more or less. “Identification is not identity.”[5] We need to move away from the conceptualization of ‘person’ and ‘identification’ in order to think more inceptually. For this, we find valuable insight in a speech made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, at the World Council of Churches in February 2006. In this speech, the Archbishop suggested that we should move away from conceptualization of ‘identification’ in favour of inceptually thinking about identity as a “map of relationships.”[6] That is, ‘identity’ is not a list of static categories to which we *belong*, rather it is a series of relationships in which we are involved. The more thoroughly structured is our ‘map of relationships’, the more firmly established is our personal identity. Here, again, we have arrived at a commitment to dialogue. Our personal identity is tantamount to our commitment to dialogue with others on our map of relationships. A cosmopolitan, therefore, can be understood as a person with a cosmopolitan map of relationships.

---

[5] Raimon Panikkar, *Christophany: The Fullness of Man*, trans. Alfred DiLascia, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004, 57.

[6] Rowan Williams, “Plenary on Christian Identity and Religious Plurality,” *World Council of Churches* (February 2006), http://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/assembly/porto-alegre-2006/2-plenary-presentations/christian-identity-religious-plurality/rowan-williams-presentation.html (21 May 2007), Document No. PLEN 02.1.

Having shed some light on what we might mean by 'global response', what, then, do we mean by the term 'global responsibility'? To whatever extent we have an *ability* to respond globally, we must have a global commitment to dialogue, which is to say a more global map of relationships. This, I hope, has already been shown. But the word 'responsibility' means something more than simply our *ability to respond*, does it not? Responsibility at least implies, though, that we have some sort of duty or moral obligation to live up to our abilities. One cannot have a *responsibility* that is somehow *beyond* his or her ability to respond, so the two are inseparably connected. This means that we have a moral obligation and duty to dis-cover our abilities to respond; otherwise we cannot be assured that we have met our responsibility and fulfilled our moral obligation. Therefore, we must ask, *do we* have the ability to commit to dialogue? Here, I do not mean on a 'national' scale, since we have already shown this *idea* to be at least troublesome, if not altogether fallacious. More directly, the question becomes, "Do *I* have an ability to commit to dialogue?" Fifteen years ago, our answer to this question would, indeed, be different from today. Along with the power of the internet and global communication on an unforeseen scale, we have also received a new *ability* to respond and new *responsibilities* commensurate with that ability. In a way never before possible, cosmopolitans around the globe have ability to dialogue and, hence, a newfound *responsibility* to commit to dialogue, which, I have shown, is the essence of global community and global response.

4. Terr(or)ific Response

With this understanding of *global response*, we can now return to the question of *terror-ism.* As I tried to emphasize with my introduction, terror-ism is that which names terror as an emotional response and is, as such, entirely personal. In order to respond to terror (and this means to respond to the enactor of terror), we must ask *why?* Most often, and particularly in the US immediately following 11/9/01, this question is asked from the most personal perspective: *Why me? Why cause terror in me?* In order to come to some answer, though, the question must shift focus and become: *Why you? Why do you seek to cause terror?*[7] Unfortunately, most people seem to leap over this question completely in order to come to the next question: *Why do you seek to cause terror in me?* Already, the dialogue has become one-sided. In order to be truly cosmopolitan (and, thus, to be able to initiate a global response to terrorism), we must remain committed to the second question as well as the other two.

In our attempt to answer this second question, there is a real danger of presenting terror-ists in a monolithic manner, as if all enactors of terror act for the same reasons or to the same end. Nineteen terrorists enacted terror in the US on 11/9/01 and we may never truly know what their intentions were. Whatever their aim, though, those intentions seem quite different from the intentions of Israel when it showered cluster bombs over villages in southern Lebanon in 2006 or those of the Sudanese military for genocidal attacks in Darfur even today. But, at the risk of monolithic essentialization, we can find at least two common elements regarding the intentions of those who enact terror. These two elements represent a partial attempt to venture a response to the question, *why do you (terrorists) seek to cause terror?*

The first common element is an intention by terrorists simply to be heard and to be noticed. Despite the term 'global village', the world continues to feel quite enormous, which makes 'me' (each of us) feel quite small, quite insignificant, and quite unable to be heard. Terror, then, becomes a desperate attempt to be heard. Terror by murder/suicide is seen as the most desperate, but also the means through which one is most heard. For example, one would not likely know the name Seung-Hui Cho without the desperate act of terror in his murder/suicide at Virginia Tech University on 16 April 2007. Some would say (and have said), that to give such people a voice – to publicize, discuss, and even to hear – is to validate their terror and to make it successful. There is some truth in that. However, one might respond that their effort to create terror has *already* been successful. By hearing those voices, in an attempt to understand the question *why you?*, we are committing ourselves to dialogue. We are committing ourselves in an effort to understand why such terror was enacted so that we might avoid it in the future. By committing ourselves to dialogue, we do so not *just* for our own safety and wellbeing, but also in the hopes of rescuing people like Seung-Hui Cho from the depths of despair and out from under the weight of hegemonic objectification.

---

[7] If our commitment to dialogue and response is authentic, then we must use the pronoun 'you' and not the impersonal third person 'they'. A 'they' cannot respond. Only a 'you' can respond.

5. The Force of Dialogical Ideas

During his farewell visit to the White House, British Prime Minister Tony Blair gave an interview to Steve Inskeep of National Public Radio. During this interview, he said: "If I have a criticism of our policy, if you like, the only way you're going to knock out this terrorism eventually is not just through the force of arms, but through the force of ideas: Freedom, yes, and democracy, yes, but also about justice and about opportunity for people."[8] Here again, to grasp Blair's meaning, we must not understand 'ideas' as ειδος, as if there was an extra-terrestrial 'war' amongst Platonic ἰδέαι. Instead, ideas indicate some form of dialogue among persons. We must ask, though, whether or not it is appropriate or responsible to associate 'force' and 'dialogue' in this manner. Isn't 'force of arms' somewhat dichotomous and inconsistent with dialogue ('force of ideas')? If the 'force of *our* ideas' is powerful enough to overcome the 'force of *their* ideas', then why pursue the 'force of arms'? While the expression, 'force of arms', is a tacit acquiescence, the 'force of ideas' is insufficient. What, then, should be done?

The answer seems clear. If our 'force of arms' is insufficient, we strengthen our arms. If our 'force of ideas' is insufficient, should we not seek to strengthen our ideas? It seems to me that the former represents a failure of the latter such that the two cannot progress beside one another. If military war indicates a failure to dialogue, then how can dialogue proceed in the midst of military war? Is not the beginning of one consubstantial with the end of the other? If so, then we must decide which is more important and which is more valuable; that is to say, which is more effective.

Recall the words of Cicero in 44CE to Cassius: "What is there that can be done against force without force?"[9] Is this not the very question which this journal seeks to answer, nearly two millennia later? Raimon Panikkar suggests that "the appropriate answer [to Cicero] would be to introduce the subtle, delicate distinction between 'force' and 'violence'."[10] Contra-Blair, however, we must recognize that this 'delicate distinction' cannot survive synthesis. We cannot 'balance' the force of violence and the force of ideas. The introduction of the force of violence is a tacit (or, perhaps, cacophonous) acquiescence that our 'ideas' lack force. Consider, if our ideas were adequately forceful, then why pursue violence?

---

[8] Steve Inskeep, "Complete NPR Interview with Tony Blair," http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=10244816 (17 May 2007). The transcript here varies slightly from the actual interview. My quotation is derived from a recording of the interview. This recording is available on the website listed here.

[9] Raimon Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament: The Way to Peace*, trans. Robert R. Barr, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995, 39.

There is another common element to terror-ist intention: manipulation. This follows from the first element. The desire 'to be heard' indicates a desire to 'manipulate' or change the behaviour of others. The rebel forces in Iraq use terrorism not so much because they want to instil terror, but because they want freedom and independence. Israel showered southern Lebanon with cluster bombs because they wanted to stop kidnappings and border snipers. The terrorists on 11/9/01 intended to weaken the US commitment to Israel. Seung-Hui Cho wanted to manipulate people into being less judgmental and less materialistic (but not, apparently, less violent).[11] By refusing to yield to such overt manipulation, we are, it would seem, denying the terrorists this goal. The solution is certainly not to yield to such overt manipulation in order to simply avoid future terrorism. Freedom and justice are too important for such yielding.

On the other hand, isn't refusing to yield also to manipulation? Suppose, for example, I was planning to give you a gift of money, but then you threaten to hit me if I don't give the money. If I give you the money because of the threat, then I am allowing you to manipulate me. If, though, I decide not to give you the money because of the threat, am I not also allowing your actions to manipulate my own? What if I had not yet decided to give the money to you? Would the situation change? My point here is that it is important to hear the voices of terrorists in order to respond. If we re-act, then we are giving them great power because we are allowing them to manipulate us. If we *respond*, though, then we are giving power not to the terrorists, but to dialogue itself. Those ideas which are the most *responsible* should be revealed in our commitment to dialogue in and through the dialogue itself and never as a re-action, which is always manipulation, even when it is unyielding.

---

[10] Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 39.

[11] This is according to the videos Cho submitted to NBC News indicating his desire to be heard.

However, we must recognize that a dialogue among unequals is not a dialogue but a lecture. Open and honest, which is to say effective, dialogue must occur among equals. For those with political, military, and economic power, this requires what Panikkar refers to as 'cultural disarmament'.[12] Much like military disarmament, cultural disarmament is difficult, risky, and leaves us vulnerable.[13] The same, we might note, is true of military engagement. Few would dispute that the US, for example, has entered a difficult and risky engagement in Iraq that has left it vulnerable. There is a danger in misinterpreting Panikkar's notion of 'cultural disarmament'. It is not a riddance of cultural or a de-culturalization. Our culture, after all, is part and parcel of our identity and cannot be disposed of or abdicated. Instead, Panikkar compels us towards a *disarmament* of our culture such that we can enter into dialogue with those of different cultures on equal (which does not mean 'same') footing. Only in this way can the 'Other' become a 'Thou'. Culture (which, of course, includes both politics and religion) then becomes 'my culture' and 'your culture'. Culture persists, but is dis-armed, enabling fruitful and peaceful dialogue.

The global response to terror-ism, then, should be a commitment to dialogue. This should not be misunderstood as some idealist ideology that suggests we should sit and dialogue with terror-ists. The language of terror-ism is terror, which is the opposite of dialogue and response. A global response, as I emphasized earlier, can only be enacted by cosmopolitans, and this means those who are committed neither to self nor to 'nation', but to dialogue itself. As such, a global dialogue can only occur between cosmopolitans and never between a cosmopolitan and a terrorist. Will this philosophy bring an end to terrorism? No. That is not likely. But this is not a discussion of what will bring an end to terror-ism. Such a discussion would be outside of the question of respons-ibility because it is outside of our ability to respond, or even to react.

6. Reaction and Response

To illustrate this last point, we must turn to the ensuing re-action to terrorism on the global stage. We have seen, since 11/9/01, the US and

---

[12] Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament.*

[13] Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 20.

England invade Afghanistan and Iraq. These invasions have been repeatedly classified as a re-action to the terrorist events in the US and in London. With these re-actions, it has been made clear that the governments of these countries are committed to action and re-action and not to dialogue and response. The incontrovertible message is that violence, as such, is not only acceptable and justifiable, it is also preferable to or more effective than dialogue. The underlying message is that of hegemony: *we are stronger than thou, so you best not act against us or we will act against you with greater force of arms.*

But once we identify 'voice' as a fundamental cause of terror-ism, then we must appreciate that we are forcing those under our hegemony to realize that their only options are life-*without*-voice or death-*with*-voice. No doubt, the instinct to survive will compel most people to choose the former. But how many will choose the latter? Seung-Hui Cho and Timothy McVeigh demonstrated that one is enough. The terror-ists on 11/9/01 demonstrated that nineteen is enough. If we acquiesce that violence is justifiable and is ever superior to dialogue, then we, consequently, acquiesce that terror-ism is justifiable in at least some cases. How many cases? Under which circumstances? For whom? By whom? Towards whom? Towards what end? What about those who are starving to death and watching their families and children starve? What about those suffering under neo-colonialism and economic imperialism? As soon as we prioritize violence over dialogue, we fall into this line of questioning and into a moral obscurity from which we can never recover.

Finally, consider our options from the most pragmatic view. We cannot watch everybody. We cannot stop everybody. We can never eliminate all threats. Violence will not accomplish these any more than will dialogue. In fact, I do not even mean to suggest that violence is *never* an option. There are certainly situations (Hitler and World War II come to mind) in which dialogue is powerless and action becomes necessary.[14] As I stated earlier, global dialogue can only occur among cosmopolitans. Our goal should not be to stop terrorists, for I do not think this is a goal that lies within our response-ability;[15] instead our goal can be, nay should be, to dramatically quell the *production* of terrorists. Once we identify 'voice' (the lack thereof) as a fundamental motivation of terrorism, then the prioritizing of dialogue is dis-covered as a means to provide an alternative venue to terrorism. Our goal, then, is not to dialogue with terrorists, but to prevent would-be terrorists from becoming terrorists by providing an alternative venue in which they would be heard. This is by no means a panacea ... but what is?

---

[14] On the other hand, we might argue that there was some point, well prior to World War II, where a more effective dialogue could have prevented or, at least, mitigated the necessity of violence. Our task is not revisionist history, but to learn from our mistakes. Panikkar writes: "victory never leads to peace. Victory leads to victory." Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 94.

7. Conclusion

There is much that is said in the saying of 'terrorism and global responsibility'. Terror is emotional and, as such, is personal. It cannot be resolved through impersonal means and, certainly, not through the concept of 'nation' or 'global' or any such Platonism which prioritizes *idea* over person. Further, 'terrorists' do not exist. Persons who cause and seek to cause terror do exist. 'Nations' and 'global community' do not exist (that is, if we take 'global community' as an extension of the modernist notion of 'nation' as something extant). Persons committed to dialogue are nations and cosmopolitan persons committed to dialogue constitute the global community. Only by becoming increasingly cosmopolitan and increasing our commitment to dialogue do we have any hope of formulating (or even imagining) something we can call a 'global response'. From a theoretical (i.e., ethical) perspective, only in the prioritization of a dialogical response over a violent re-action can we undermine the ideology which undergirds terror-ism. From a pragmatic perspective, only by allowing a venue (and establishing a priority or value) for others to be heard can we quell the production of terror-ists in their desperation to be heard. In the end, the global response to terror-ism must be just that: a global listening and responding of cosmopolitan persons in committed dialogue.

Dialogue is commensurate with openness to the wisdom of others. In keeping with this, it is fitting that I should end with the wisdom of another, a great cosmopolitan sage whom I have quoted often, Raimon Panikkar. On the final page of his book, *Cultural Disarmament: The Way*

---

[15] There is an acceptance in modern society that murder and crime can be subdued but never eradicated. For some reason, though, it has become politically incorrect to suggest, as I am here, that terrorism can never be eradicated.

to Peace, Panikkar modifies the Roman adage "*Si vis pacem, para bellum*,"[16] i.e., "If you want peace, prepare yourself for war." He writes:

> The desire for peace is equivalent to a desire for dialogue, and the desire for dialogue arises when we think that we can learn something from others, along with converting them to our point of view where possible. Fanaticisms and absolutisms prevent persons from travelling together, because they make us believe ourselves self-sufficient or in full possession of the truth. '*Si vis pacem, para teipsum*' ('Would you have peace? Prepare yourself.').[17]

---

[16] Flavius Vegetius Renatus from *Epitome Rei Militaris*, book 3, Prologue: "*Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum*," cited in Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 120, footnote 74.

[17] Panikkar, *Cultural Disarmament*, 103.

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 61-71

TRANSCULTURAL ASPECTS OF WARRIORSHIP

Maja Milčinski◆

1. Introduction

Circa 1200 B.C. marks two famous events in the history of humankind of a very similar character. They were certainly not directly connected, since they occurred in two widely distant lands. One took place in the north-western part of Asia Minor, the other far away on the wide plains of Kuru Kshetra, close to Hastinapur, today's New Delhi.

Homer described the great military battle between the Greeks and the Trojans in his *Iliad*,[1] the great epic poem which had still not been plucked from mythology, so that the Greek gods and goddesses become involved in the fighting and quarrelling of the Greek warriors: the determined and hot-blooded Achilles, Agamemnon, Ajax, Diomedes, Nestor, Odysseus, and the Trojan heroes, Hector, Paris, Priam, and others. This was a huge battle, probably the largest in history to that date. The Greeks brought 100,000 soldiers against Troy (Ilium). After a ten-year siege, the Greeks succeeded in overcoming the Trojans with the famous trick with the Trojan horse. Troy was razed to the ground, its inhabitants massacred, only Aeneas and his father Anchises remaining alive, and the Greeks suffered equally large losses. This happened around 1200 B.C.,[2] or, according to other sources,[3] between 1193 and 1104 B.C.

Similarly, around 1200 B.C., two great armies came in conflict in India. They were lead by warriors of the same family, descendents of the legendary King Kuru, who had split into two hostile branches in conflict for territory: one of the branches, led by the ethically problematic Duryodhana, claimed the name of Kuru for itself and had complete

---

◆**Prof. Dr. Maja Milčinski**, the author of *Dictionary of Asian Philosophical Terms* (Slovenia 2003) and many other scientific books, has held teaching and research positions at Ljubljana University (Slovenia), Tokyo University, Toronto University, Marburg University (Germany), International Research Centre for Japanese Studies (Kyoto) and Rikkyo University (Tokyo), and Beijing University (Peoples Republic of China).

[1] Homer, *Iliad*, trans. A. Sovre, Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1950.

[2] Homer, *Iliad*, 11.

[3] *The Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition (1985), vol. 27, 134.

authority over the entire land. The other, wrongly expropriated branch of Pandavas, was led by Arjuna, an honest hero for whom Krishna intervened, shown in the story first as a wise, neutral lord and experienced soldier, who initially tried to calm both sides, and later as a respected god, avatar – the representative of the supreme god Vishnu, sent to earth in order to help people resolve their difficulties. This story, too, together with the bloody battle itself, which lasted 18 days and left alive only the blind king Dhritarashtra of the Kurus, and on the honest side, only the Pandava brothers, is contained in the extensive epic *The Mahabharata.*[4] The central place in this epic is held by the chapter entitled the *Bhagavad Gita*, the Song of the Lord, which is essentially a prologue to the battle itself.[5]

Do these two massive, probably the biggest organized military conflicts in history until that time, which occurred almost simultaneously, in two such distant places, allow the following speculation: is *Homo sapiens* perhaps programmed for occasional outbreaks of massive aggression against its own species, which lead to the slaughter of large numbers of individuals and the destruction of their possessions? Such speculation could perhaps be developed further, as though, thus, to maintain some ecological balance, etc. However, it is necessary to close the path to this speculation and return to the mentioned comparisons which, as two examples of mass slaughter – spatially distant but contemporary – are surprisingly similar in their internal dynamics, but nevertheless quite different.

2. Greek Pattern

The world of the heroes of the Trojan War and their very humanlike gods, as described by Homer, was inspired by cheerfulness, love of life, and vigorous activity. The notion that fighting was a vital need and joy for these heroes and gods cannot be avoided, and while the fighting was going on, there was no longer sufficient room for reflection and the weighing of conscience. The translator of the *Iliad* into Slovene, Sovre, felt this, even in their occasional declarations of existential pressures, raised as an inconvenience unworthy of any particular attention:

> However, alongside the cheerful optimism, the epic is also not without pessimistic traits. In some parts of this epic there too sounds the string of anxiety at the notion of inexorable death, which sets a

---

[4] *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1985 Edition, vol. 13, 58.

[5] *The Bhagavad Gita*, trans. S. Radhakrishnan, London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1958.

limit to any kind of activity. Homeric man is inspired especially by the mystical threat of the eternal law of the Fates, which governs even the gods. So although they do not age, they are neither immortal nor all-powerful. They, too, are dependent on the original law which operates according to inescapable Destiny and finally draws also heaven into the whirlpool of general destruction. Homer's heroes expect nothing from the afterlife, so their spirit is reluctantly separated from the body and lamenting departs to Hades; he is sad to abandon the "flower of manhood" when he knows that waiting in the underworld is eternal darkness, endless vegetating in dull semi-consciousness. What does Achilles' shadow say to Odysseus? 'I wanted to be a labourer in the fields, to earn my daily bread with the animals, a landless man, shifting for his own food, rather than govern here (in the Hades) the crowd of deceased![6]

It was unnecessary for the Greeks, with their character and approach to life, to have some dramatic, motives for determining such a powerful punitive expedition: during a visit to Sparta, Paris had kidnapped King Menelaus' consort, who was more beautiful than chaste. No moral, ethical doubts or other philosophical reasons influence the progress of events. Essentially, constant action then follows, mainly by the Greek and Trojan heroes, and women also having an important role in this spectacle, either as the subject of disputes between famous warriors, or as goddesses who distort and upset the wise plans of their Olympian consorts through their manipulations and interventions.

A classical Hellenist philologist evaluated the role of Homer's creation in the development of European culture as follows: "With Homer begins the unique internal formation of the European man. There is no essential difference between Homer's thought and ours, though three millennia lie between us."[7] To this optimistic thought of a Hellenist, we would add for our purpose only that this European spirit of genius also developed weapons, right up to the crown of this destructiveness – the atom bomb.

3. Indian Pattern

Let us now turn to the other, Indian example: the long and equally bloody battle in Kuru Kshetra. The motive here is weightier and appropriate, generic bellicosity does not have such importance as in the Greek epic. The translator described the background to the events before the dramatic dialogue between Arjuna and Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* as follows:

---

[6] Homer, *Iliad*, 1.1.

[7] Homer, *Iliad*, 6.

> Some decades prior to the beginning of the situation in the *Bhagavadgita*, Arjuna had been involved in a serious dispute between the two branches of his family. On the one side were he and his four brothers, descendents of Pandu, and on the other their cousins, the hundred sons of Dhritarashtra, who declared themselves to be descendents of the firstborn of Kuru, though actually both branches of the family were descendents of Kuru. The aggressive sons of Kuru had long persecuted the sons of Pandu. After some of their tricks have failed, they try to use the weakness of the eldest brother, Yudhishtira, who could not resist a passion for dice. They invited him to play, and cheated him until he wagered his share of the kingdom, all his brothers and their common wife, Draupadi. However, the just though weak old king Dhritarastra took pity on the sons of Pandu and returned their share of the kingdom. After a while, his sons again arranged a dice contest, with the same result. The sons of Pandu had to spend twelve years in exile in the wilderness, and spend thirteen years unknown among people. This period, when the main story, so to speak, starts, is filled with tales of the adventures of various other legendary personalities. The sons of Pandu fortunately survive the punishment, but this does not bring reconciliation for them: the sons of Kuru do not want to return an inch of ground, let alone share the kingdom with them. Conflict becomes inevitable and both sides seek allies.[8]

When two hostile armies confront each other, righteous Arjuna does not show the kind of fighting euphoria which has spurred on the Greeks towards their fight for Troy. On the contrary, Arjuna (Feuerstein ascribes to him Hamletian character) experiences a deep spiritual and moral, organismic shock, when he thinks about the fact that he was supposed to kill the people with whom he had familiar and friendly ties. He would give up the arms and surrender to the enemies, even at the price of his own life.

That is where the main story of *Bhagavad Gita* begins: Krishna offers himself to Arjuna as the coachman of his fighting carriage. He is also saving Arjuna from his defeatism, first by appealing to his initiation into the warrior caste. When this has no effect, Krishna opens the contents of the deepest Indian Yoga and existential philosophy, which concludes with the insight that to be filled with the universal Spirit, Brahman, should be the aim of everyone. Then the feeling of guilt for one's actions vanishes.[9]

---

[8] *Bhagavadgita*: *Gospodova pesem*, trans. and commentaries, Vlasta Pacheiner, Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1970, 109.

> The man who is united with the Divine (Brahman) and knows the truth thinks 'I do nothing at all'.
>
> He who works, having given up his attachment, resigning his actions to God (Brahman), is not touched by sin, even as a lotus leaf (is untouched) by water.

Arjuna is finally detached from his doubts, his ego, saved from the illusion that it is he who will set right some fault, or is burdened with some indelible sin. The salvation of his ego is henceforth only a tiny cog in the mighty mechanism of the Highest, the Absolute.

What Krishna communicates to Arjuna cannot be characterized only as a lesson that conveyed to Arjuna an important logical "insight." It was an unusually speedily implemented counselling that occurred on a meditative-mystical level. While the action is only accessible to us through the textual medium, the story cannot communicate to us the elementary shock which embraces the mental-spiritual side of the subject, on a level which is closely connected with his vegetativum. So we cannot resent philosophers who are personally unconvinced by Krishna's argument, as though with such a logical base it could no longer be imagined that Arjuna could start the battle. Pacheiner states:

> Many literary historians have discovered with surprise that (the *Bhagavad Gita*) is written in support of war. Some of them, e.g., Edgerton and Winternitz, angrily note that its ideology justifies any crime. The East-German Marxist, the well-known ideologue Walter Ruben, even says that the *Bhagavad Gita* was written only in defence of the feudal nobility as the governing class.[10]

Feuerstein[11] sets against such critics first some general standpoints in the sense that, over the years, moral standards also follow their own development.

---

[99] *The Bhagavad Gita*, 177-178/8,9,10/V.

[1010] *Bhagavadgita*: *Gospodova pesem*, 110.

[11] Georg Feuerstein, *Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita: Its philosophy and Cultural Setting*, London: Rider and Co., 1974, 147-158.

> The exclusive reliance on reason for answering ethical questions has proven a pitfall to Western philosophers. Reason works with abstraction, not the 'concretes' of life. It represents a static picture or 'cross-section' of reality. The pioneers of the intellect are beginning to realize this. More and more, scientists call for a complete overhaul of scientific methodology. The criteria of validity are shifting perceptibly from 'abstract' and 'consistent' to 'practical workability'... The diversified processes of life cannot be abstracted by reason and retain at the same time their 'life' quality. An ethics grounded in pure generalizations cannot possibly be expected to answer any practical purposes. Therefore, Krishna founds his ethics on a deeper and wider understanding of life. He does not discard reason, but he also does not rely on it. His attitude is refreshingly experiential: Life itself must be the ultimate criterion of the applicability of ethical ideals. *Svadharma* is the channel through which man can reach his essential nature, that is, realize his 'innate idea'. It has far more in common with Socrates' inner voice, 'the daimonion'.[12]

An ethical judgement is as dependent on internal principles as it is on objective factors. The indologist, S. N. Dasgupta, is talking in essence about 'internal principles' when he presents the concept '*svadharma*' as an "individual norm which means only an obligation reinforced in the tradition of the four castes." Feuerstein here corrects him, that *svadharma* is only "the channel through which man can achieve his being, that is to say, comprehend his own 'innate idea'."

So, war became a legitimate form of human behaviour, either by being understood as a matter of course (Greek) or through elaborate philosophical argument (Indian).

4. Ethics of War in Old China

In discussing the birth of philosophy in China, place of honour is given to Confucius (Kong Zi 551-479 B.C.), perhaps not so much on the basis of date of birth as on the basis of his work which, as a first level of self-formation, suitably introduces us to a specific Asian model of perception of the basic questions of human existence.[13] The times in which Confucius lived and worked were troubled. The mass of small feudal states were in constant conflict. Confucius was one of the voices of the spiritual golden age that embraced both West and East in the 5th century B.C. Socrates (470-399) and Buddha (557-476) both lived and worked at that time, and the 5th century was also the period when the *Old Testament* of the Bible was put together. Confucius, who thus wanted to serve a prince in building a state, did not suit most of his employers, who wanted more military strategic advice than the counsel of wise statesmanship. What, for example, can a warlord do with the advice that is inscribed in Confucius' *Analects*?

---

[12] Feuerstein, *Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita, Its philosophy and Cultural Setting*, 152-153.

[13] *The Analects of Confucius*, trans. Arthur Waley, New York: Vintage Books 1938.

> Tzu-gung asked about government. The Master said, sufficient food, sufficient weapons, and the confidence of the common people. Tzu-gung said, Suppose you had no choice but to dispense with one of these three, which would you forgo? The Master said weapons. Tzu-kung said, Suppose that you were forced to dispense with one of the two that is left, which would you forgo? The Master said, Food. For from old death has been the lot of all men; but a people that no longer trusts its rulers are lost indeed.[14]

The *Yijing*,[15] an ancient oracle and collection of existential wisdom from the end of the second and beginning of the first millennium B.C., also dealt with disputes and wars between people and states, and Confucius is supposed to have added his commentary to the book. It mentions this theme in several places, particularly in hexagram 6, entitled "Conflict." It recommends careful consideration at the beginning and also "a cautious halt halfway," if possible also to overlook the causes of conflict since victory in a conflict does not bring long-term happiness. In hexagram 7, "The army," it advises against war, which is "at best a dangerous matter which leaves damage and destruction in its wake." But if war is inevitable, it should not be conducted savagely, since if the mob kills everything that gets in its way, this cannot be victory but only defeat and misfortune.

Daoists[16] had equally to be reconciled with war as legitimate. In the basic Daoist work, the *Dao de jing* by Lao Zi (cca. 604-517), there are thoughts and understandings which can be seen as one of the most important milestones from the point of view of the question of man's being. Besides these general characteristic of the work, there are also some parts seemingly untypical for the book, since they could more easily be imagined in the memoirs of some military strategist than in a work with the dignity of the *Dao de jing.*

---

[14] *The Analects of Confucius*, 158-XII-7.

[15] *Yijing*: *Knjiga premen*, trans. and commentaries, Maja Milčinski, Ljubljana: Domus, 1992.

[16] Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1963.

> Aims are instruments of ill omen, not the instruments of a gentleman. When one is compelled to use them, it is best to do so without relish. There is no glory in victory, and to glorify it despite this is to exult in the killing of men. One who exults in the killing of men will never have his way in the empire.
>
> On occasions of rejoicing, precedence is given to the left; on occasions of mourning, precedence is given to the right. A lieutenant's place is on the left; the general's place is on the right. This means that it is mourning rites that are observed.
>
> When great numbers of people are killed, one should weep over them with sorrow. When victorious in war, one should observe the rites of mourning.[17]

5. Conclusion

It is precisely in our time, when there is never a moment at which some bloody conflict is not taking place somewhere in the world, that discussing war as an unimaginable absurdity cannot be considered as idle talk.

The story of Mohandas Karamchanda Gandhi (1869-1948), the Indian political and spiritual leader, Mahatma – the Great Spirit as he was known – who achieved the independence of India in 1947 after many long years of a peculiar pattern of political activity, is well known. In contrast to revolutionary struggle, he established his tactic of non-violent activity, which he called "*satyagraha*" – i.e., "to remain aware of the truth." Another of his principles, adopted by his adherents, was "*Swaraj*," literally meaning "self-control" has the depth of a double meaning: psychologically this is self-mastery and overcoming fear, but politically this expression meant national independence and economic self-sufficiency. Further, it meant starting social and political changes with the spiritual transformation of individuals. His *satyagraha* was more than passive resistance, since it also embraced attempts to constructively cooperate with opponents of Gandhi's movement. One has to be acquainted with the history of stubborn British colonialism properly and adequately to appreciate Gandhi's contribution to methods of non-aggressive resistance in the context of human civilization and spirituality. Let me just add that Gandhi greatly appreciated the *Bhagavad Gita* and its philosophical lessons.[18]

---

[17] Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, 89-90/XXXI.

From the Tibetan philosophical and religious culture came the idea of *Shambhala.*[19] The old legend tells of a hidden Buddhist kingdom in some Himalayan valley which is governed by wise and compassionate rulers. This is supposed to be a land of pure prosperity and peace. A famous 19th century Buddhist teacher, Mipham, described this land in more detail in his *Great Commentary to the Kalachakra*. Other teachers, however, believe that there is no real "Kingdom of *Shambhala*," but that it is only an idea of non-religious enlightenment and the self-development of human existence in the spirit of militarism. Not, however, as training in aggressiveness, but in the sense of the Tibetan *pawo*, which means simply someone who is courageous. This is an image that is also recognized by some other cultures.

The key to "militarism" as well as the first principle of *Shambhala* is that you accept yourself, such as you are. Free of all selfishness, benevolent to all who need help, heroic but at the same time gentle, without any aggression. In this kind of non-aggressiveness one is not even afraid of sacrificing one's own life. Such a character of a "warrior," though, should not become an obsession and the subject of proselytizing. In order to avoid such fanaticism, a sense of humour is needed, as a guarantor of proper proportion. For a man to maintain such an adaptable approach to life and discover also its funny side, he must first recognize and overcome his basic fear, his fear of death in the first place, which can completely paralyze a person. Less aggressive, but also widespread, is the fear that we will be unequal to the demands the world imposes on us. When we successfully recognize these fears and come to terms with them, we gradually become calmer and more pliable, but a little more melancholic and, at the same time, ever more fearless warriors or soldiers without the aggressive arrogance (brutality) with which such a title is normally linked, more sensitive, and, let's say, in the face of an understanding of one's own transitoriness sometimes more melancholic. W. Walther said of fear:

---

[18] *The Encyclopedia Americana*, International Edition (1985), vol. G, 278-284.

[19] Chögyam Trungpa, *Shambhala: The Sacred Path of the Warrior*, Boston-London: Shambhala, 1988.

> Fear is a basic characteristic of human existence, which we cannot and should not deny or efface. Since right there and then, when we want at all costs to avoid it, it raises itself most forcefully: it thus teaches us our triviality. On no account flee from fear or try to avoid it, but honestly recognize the tone that it generally gives to our existence, and only then declare war on it. Even Kierkegaard recognized the positive side of fear when he declared: 'Whoever gets used to bear the fear as much as is his/her fate, has learned the highest wisdom'.[20]

The author of the work on *Shambhala* explicitly stresses that this comprehension does not translate that man has found "some philosophy" but that he has succeeded in harmonizing spirit and body. Such an aim is also concealed in the method of achieving this internal harmony and tranquillity that Gautama Buddha presented and taught 2500 years ago. This is meditation in a sitting position. A person sits on the ground with legs crossed, back and neck straight, and ensures only that his/her breathing is relaxed and rhythmic. Nothing more! Such meditation cannot be understood as contemplation on specific themes. It is not important what sort of thoughts come to mind, since thoughts, in essence, are neither sinful nor virtuous. Let them run as they will, thus is the spirit pure and empty until a benevolent tranquillity is created which leaves the Ego aside and which is at least prepared to do something for others.

Anyone patient enough to follow such a theory and its resolutions and imbued with the traditional concept of war as an unavoidable, occasional outburst of conflict between major social groups, will in all probability see in the idea which is built on Buddhism, of cultivating benevolence and love without any trace of egoism and a willingness always to offer help to those nearby, and recommends meditation in the sitting position as the principal method of achieving such a naturalness, a doctrine which serves anything but "militarism." It is, then, difficult to believe that the author of the *Shambhala*, the Tibetan master Chögyam Trungpa, also had in his program a military organization based on the Buddhist principles of non-aggression and one of the guiding mottos "victory over war."[21]

---

[20] Werner Walther, *Die Angst im menschlichen Dasein*, München: Reinhardt, 1967.

[21] Kidder Smith, "The Sun Tzu 'Art of War' and My Experiences in the Buddhist Military (Manuscript), June 1992, 2.

The report on the Buddhist organization, "victory over war," often reminded me of the well-known work of the Czech writer, Jaroslav Hasek, *The Good Soldier Schweik*, which gave laughter to millions of people throughout the world, while only a few people grasped the deeper meaning of the work; that it is possible even when in the clutches of the human whirling of war, with all its absurdities and cruelties, to live non-aggressively, retaining a naïve benevolence to the people around you, even those who identify with the traditional, so to speak, glorified image of war. It is not so important that the "Schweik" attitude relaxes the aggressive tension of the opponent, since there is nothing provocative about him. It is important that the root of such an attitude is to be sought in an insight into human transitoriness, not that this insight could be worked into some sophisticated philosophy. Schweik has some inner understanding that one day he will die, and he leaves to fate when this will happen, and delights in the humble "here and now." The symbol of Schweik and his attitude probably also helped the Czechs and the Slovaks when the Soviet Union destroyed the vision of the Czech spring and poisoned Czechoslovakia with their ideology, right up to the end of the Soviet Empire.

We should now overview the possibility or even probability that in such cruel times often the ways of "non-aggressive combativeness" appear which might broach the widespread prejudice about the legitimacy and inevitability of war.

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 73-84

TERRORISM

A New Mode of Dehumanizing People into 'Targets'

Mathew Attumkal◆

1. Introduction

The twentieth century (1900-2000) witnessed two world-renowned figures who were also contemporaries. Both had a powerful influence upon the world. But the means they adopted to influence the world were entirely opposite. Indeed, the philosophy of life they proclaimed was such that the course of history chronicled a number of offspring to their ideologies. The first one was Adolf Hitler (1889-1945). To mount the stairs of power, he literally followed the way of terror and might. The net result of his thought-pattern gave birth to a notorious event in the twentieth century described as World War II (1939-1945). He followed his philosophy to the hilt, which resulted in nothing but the blood and tears of millions of human beings. Diluted in the culture of assassination and mixed in the flavours of hatred and chaos, Hitler dreamed of a world of vain-glory by making humans as enemies to each other and degrading them to a level of mere means or targets. The second figure was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, fondly called Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948). He too had a philosophy of life blended with the jewels of truth and non-violence. He had an uncompromising attitude to his principles and the corresponding result was that of a bloodless struggle for the freedom of a nation, and of love, peace and everlasting joy in the hearts of millions and millions of humans. Uplift of the human dignity was his sole aim. *Sarvodaya* (welfare of all) was his secret and sacred *mantra* for glory and success. He believed in the culture of inter-human and intra-human relationship[1] and love was the powerful

---

◆**Mathew Attumkal** CMI, who holds a Licentiate in Philosophy from Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram and Master's both in Philosophy (Kamaraj University) and English (Madras University), is currently teaching philosophy in the Faculty of Philosophy, DVK (Bangalore).

[1] Inter-human relationship is built upon the principles of love and respect and it exists between or among the humans. Intra-human relationship is also based on love and respect but it exists within the humans alone. It is centred on the principle of sacredness of one's own life and that of the other. That is to say, intra-human relationship never permits one to become a suicide-bomber, which causes destruction to oneself and one's own fellow humans. Likewise, inter-human relationship paves

weapon he used. According to Abdul Quddus, "Hitler worshipped power; Gandhi believed in Truth and Love. The conflict between these two ideas is as old as history. Here, the world conquerors stand on one side, the apostles of human brotherhood on the other and it still continues to be so with no reconciliation in sight."[2] The greatest technology the world has ever seen is the advance of human life creatively and purposefully. Ignoring this fact is as ignoring the very life of oneself. Therefore, any venture to depersonalize a human being, at the cost of lifeless means, is like a global fatal 'kidney failure' spreading fast, challenging all human institutions and technologies. Are we ready to undergo a dialysis of human nature?

2. Historical Recordings of Dehumanization Process

History of humans is also a history of dehumanization. Most of the religions place humans immediately after the deities and as collaborators or the beneficiaries of their works.[3] Thinkers have no difficulty in accepting humans as rational and relational beings. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) placed humans in the kingdom of ends. "He who contemplates suicide should ask himself whether his actions can be consistent with the idea of humanity as an end in itself."[4] Strange to say, there has been an exploitation of the rationality and the relationality of the humans not from without but from within and there have been some unfortunate events in human history, through which humans were treated as mere means. To begin, let us first clarify the concept of dehumanization. It is an evil mode of treating humans in a manner less than their status as persons. In a wider sense, getting angry with another, not giving other's due, calumny, etc., come under dehumanization. In a strict sense, dehumanization happens due to the manipulation or wrong interpretation of certain ideologies and

---

the way for a person to respect the other as a person and not as a thing or means for one's end.

[2] Abdul Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, Delhi: Amarnath Pages, 2003, 343.

[3] The Jewish and Christian view of humans is oriented to a certain amount of divinization of the humans. God has created the humans in His image and likeness and has given him dominion over everything (Genesis 1:26). The Hindus believe in the principle of *atman* (individual self) that proceeds from the Brahman (Absolute Self) as convoying in each human being. The mystics of various religions speak with authority of an indwelling principle, that the Indians call *Antaryamin* (indweller) residing in the cave of everyone's heart.

[4] Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics*, trans. Thomas King Mill Abbot, Delhi: Orient Publication, 1987, 56.

beliefs. Hindu caste system in ancient India is the best example for dehumanizing a section of people who were labelled as untouchables. Birth was the sole determining factor to decide one's personal as well as social fate. Similarly, slavery was yet another method humans have used to dehumanize themselves. Wealth was the determining factor between a slave and a master, so much so that humans were considered no better than powerful beasts. A subtle form of dehumanization that existed in ancient Rome was the man-beast fight. Many were 'victims' for the pleasure of the aristocrats by being competitors with animals.

Looking at history from this perspective should remind us that human history is also a bundle of tears and curses of a number of innocents. Another distinct form of dehumanization is seen in the thoughts of Frederick Nietzsche (1844-1900) who classified people according to their intelligence and spoke of a master and slave morality.[5] History also proves that dehumanization has existed based on sex, colour, creed, false belief, employment, power, myths, etc. The present form of dehumanization emerging from the evils of terrorism is, however, a matter of global anxiety. Nations are sidelined; human intelligence is baffled and the modern technology is thoroughly exploited by a small margin of humans who are termed as terrorists. For them, every human, whether innocent or crooked, man or woman, child or youngster, is a 'target' for achieving their imperial end. That is to say, humans are used as a means for fulfilling their autocracy. This reduction of humans as targets by the terrorists to achieve their warped intentions has been furthered by the increase of modern mortal weapons.

Terrorism is a planned but unpredictable mode of violence pitted against all, devoid of concern for the innocent or crooked. Fretting and fighting are used as the tools to attain their objectives. Though the birth of this destructive method cannot be extracted chronologically, its infancy can be seen around the 5th century BC when rulers of Rome and Greece would terrorize those who did not pay the taxes, by putting them into crackling flames. Guerrilla form of terrorism is recorded in the life of the Chinese general Sun-Tze (c. 350 BC).[6] The ancient Greek historian

---

[5] Frederick Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale, in Mortimer J. Adler, ed., *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 43, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., 2003, 533-535.

[6] *New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1977 Edition, vol. 8, s.v. "Guerrilla Warfare," by Robert Brown Asprey.

Xenophon wrote of the effectiveness of psychological warfare against enemy populations. Terrorist movements in Palestine during 66-73 AD had been regarded as one of the first terrorist movements in recorded history. Another major terrorist movement of the world was the 'society of Assassins', which was active during the medieval age. The leader of this movement was Hasan-e Sabbah (d. 1124).[7] He realized that his group was too small to confront the enemy in an open battle and that a planned, systematic, long-term campaign of terror carried out by a small disciplined force could be the most effective political weapon.[8] Nevertheless, the terrorist movements of the twentieth century that are founded upon the principles of mass destruction constitute a different variety as it is wedded in the 'parliament of cannibals', consummated in an 'illegal union', and conceived in a 'devilish womb'. 'To depersonalize and deteriorate the beautiful creation of the Lord' is their fundamental principle. The value of human life is, thus, dependent on the decision of a few powerful persons. Are we today the silent supporters of such a monopolized history?

3. Terrorists and Targets

Terrorists are classified into various categories. However, a most acceptable form of classification is found in the study of Paul Wilkinson,[9] for whom international terrorists are of the following five classes:

- Nationalist terrorists: mainly for political purpose
- Ideological terrorists: to change a system
- Religious fanatics: to overthrow what one considers as evil in one's or other's religion
- Single-issue fanatics: to change a policy within a targeted society
- State-sponsored terrorists: done as a matter of state policy

The above classification shows that every terrorist group has an issue, which is a *target* for them. But the agony is that to achieve these dreaming targets, they convincingly forget the victims of their targets who are the innocent children, ordinary men and women, who are destined to journey not under bullet proof car, who live their daily lives by the sweat of their brow and who happen to come under the decisions taken in air-conditioned rooms and to live amidst an intoxicated atmosphere. In other words, the real targets are not the issues which they stand for but the lives of thousands and thousands of human beings. Therefore, we can say that *the target of a terrorist is himself and the other* and the unpardonable sin of a terrorist is of the double effect of dehumanization. First, they dehumanize the innocent as targets and, second, they dehumanize the members of their own group.

---

[7] *New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1977 Edition, vol. 7, s.v. "Fatimids," by Bernard Lewis.

[8] Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, 7.

[9] http://wwwnew.towson.edu/polsci/ppp/sp97/terror/variety.htm/

4. The Orbit of Terrorism and the Process of Dehumanization

We are living in an age of spacecrafts and satellites moving in the orbits. We are also aware of the catastrophe they may cause by deviating from their orbits. Figuratively, the orbit of terrorism is nothing but the agenda for which the terrorist stands and the deviation is caused by the use of evil and destructive means to achieve it. As long as their 'satellites and spacecrafts' are in their orbits, they are not terrorists. But even a slight manipulation of their devices can bring forth tremendous destructions to the world and its inhabitants. Such destructions are grouped into a threefold form of paralyses. They are cosmic paralysis, ethical paralysis, and economic paralysis. According to Lee Griffith, "Terror is not a rational phenomenon. It possesses people, body, mind, and spirit. In the extreme, it even disables the so-called 'fight or flight' response and leaves people 'paralyzed by fear'… An entire dissertation on the small chance of being hit by lightning is of little comfort to one who genuinely has the fear."[10]

4.1. Cosmic Paralysis

It denotes the paralyzing of the entire cosmos due to the vulnerable activities of the terrorists. Every terrorist activity is a form of degrading the cosmos. The cosmos, the habitat of life, is degraded into *thanathos*, the place of death. Think of a human being. Even by not doing anything directly to a person, he/she can be easily dehumanized, precisely because he/she is also a cosmic being. For example, when we do something to pollute the fresh air, it is a direct killing of the cosmic order; indirectly, it makes my fellow humans and myself suffer in a wretched manner, so much so that the perpetrator receives a free membership in the process of dehumanization by paralyzing the cosmic order. Are we also shareholders in this process? Moreover, sowing the seeds of disorder and discontent has turned to be the work of a number of 'psychosomatics'. In such a situation, dehumanization of precious human lives is the price we pay for the existing cosmic paralysis. The cosmos is a divine gift, which is given as a peaceful dwelling place for all humans; by paralyzing it, humans are deprived of its intended use.

---

[10] Lee Griffith, *The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God*, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002, 6.

4.2. Ethical Paralysis

A paralytic is the one who has some form of defect in performing spontaneous or normal actions of a human being. Such a person has an inability to move, act, or operate in a normal manner. By formulating a new law of morality rooted in the principles of destruction and dehumanization, the terrorist takes control of the ethical order of a society and produces people of a defective conscience and fractured morality. It is a signal to every member of a well-formed conscience to act against the evils of this universal crime. Abdul Quddus has reviewed this ethical paralysis in the following manner:

> The terrorists are devoid of any love and benevolence and are disinterested in truth of life. They do not like to cultivate any art, literature and music. They prefer darkness of nights to the light of the day. They like their hiding places more than one loves one's home. They do not even love children, and often kidnap them for claiming ransom. They can make a married woman a widow even after a few hours of marriage, turning every morning darker than night for all times to come.[11]

A diagnosis of this moral depredation focuses also on humans in many parts of the world longing for peace and tranquillity. Being wedded to their ideologies and idiosyncrasies, two and two seldom make four in the lexicon of a terrorist. Abortion of peace and person is the sacred *mantra* they chant at dawn. "What one cancer cell is to human body, terrorism is to human society. Terrorism begets a sense of horror and disgust deep in the people's mind which may cause psychotic tendencies in a section of society. This section is sure to turn highly problematic for the entire human race."[12]

4.3. Economic Paralysis

This fosters the weakening of the economy of a nation. However, the economy of a nation does not include its material wealth alone. It deals with all forms of wealth such as man-power (human resource), money-power, power of nature (natural resource), intellectual power, aesthetic power, creative power, etc. Thus, in short, economic paralysis affects all types of wealth without which human life would be impossible. In earlier times, most people were content with what they had. Sacrifice was a psychic pleasure for many. Nowadays, people want to enjoy what they do not have and sacrifice has turned out to be a medium for corporeal pleasure. Consequently, the sacredness of sacrifice is used as a 'divine tool' to extinguish a race. The earlier concept of *sacrifice of one's pleasure and comfort for the other* is often bypassed *for one's own pleasure and comfort.* Some even cross limits to achieve things, which stand beyond their reach in achieving what they want, and that too, at the cost of all moral codes, and divine and natural laws. The outcome of this human greed is economic paralysis. Humans are the greatest economic asset in the world. Extinction of a section or all of them for one's 'self-proclaimed principles' is equal to the destruction of the whole cosmos.

---

[11] Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, 36.

[12] Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, 5.

5. Critical and Creative Responsibilities

5.1. Collective Responsibility: Global Do's

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) once said: "Society is a troop of thinkers, and the best heads among them take the best places."[13] The conventional belief of 'the best head' is of somebody who thinks creatively, if not critically. However, following the increase of terrorists and their net works, there exists a hermeneutic of suspicion in the thought-patterns of such 'best heads'. The tendency to label others as 'sick' is a powerful syndrome among some of them. This sickly attitude to persons also guides them to view their lives as something 'to be used'. Under the title 'best head' they create worst atmospheres. They forget the fact that the premises of life are always very few. They are hesitant to live it meaningfully and beautifully. All the same our 'web age' frequently reminds us that to have success in life one is to be a bit artful because life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premises. Gifted with brain and beauty, humans alone possess the power of deducing such conclusions with the faculties of memory and thought. Therefore, human race shoulders a collective responsibility to stimulate its Universal Conscience in favour of life and life-supporting measures and to oppose the growth of those phenomenal 'best heads'.

---

[13] Cited in Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, 357.

5.1.1. A Transition from Targets and the Non-Targets

Whether we speak of targets or non-targets, both pinpoint the humans and other living beings that live in the world of terrorism. Strictly speaking, all humans come under the title 'targets'. There is no non-target. A section of people could be a target for a terrorist group and the followers of their ideology would be a non-target for them. But we are also living in an age that is marked by the presence of so-called counter-terrorists for whom the members of a terrorist ideology are mere targets for instant cremation. What a fun it must cause! Humans are guided by false ideologies rather than principles of life, by man-made weapons rather than God-given given powers of love and peace, by the powers of annihilation rather than sustenance, and by the market value rather than a paradise of worth. This is a most destructive signal to the world. That is to say, the world (of humans, plants, and beasts) is bifurcated into targets and non-targets by both terrorists and counter terrorists or by people of opposing ideologies. For them, all living beings are nothing but a point of 'target'. No superiority exists for human being. The degradation or dehumanization of all humans as one among the living beings and as someone who is destined to become a target for others challenges the dignity of humans and whispers in their ears the chants of 'fight or flight'. Therefore, a conscious transition from the victim of target to a victor of human dignity is to be ensured by the coming together of all the people of good will.

5.1.2. Cultivation of a Spiritual and Moral Quest

Human beings are endowed with various types of quests. We are addicted to natural thirst, which will be quenched by water. When Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997) listened to an inner voice, "*I Thirst*," during a train journey to Darjeeling, a town in the slopes of the Himalayas, in 1946, that was a thirst for human dignity and social order. Intoxicated with the thirst for the Absolute, St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) left everything and chose the way of absolute poverty. There is yet another form of thirst that resides so powerfully in many humans and that is the thirst for revenge and destruction which can be termed as a *thirst for blood.* Similar thirst is seen in the tragedies of Shakespeare.[14] It is a notorious thirst that one is dreaming of the destruction of the enemy and does anything to satisfy it. However, the present form of this thirst is a bit dangerous for the whole world. By annihilating mostly innocents, one's revenge is expressed, might is exposed and 'value' is highlighted. This is the precise reason that the culture of terrorism is penned as a by-product of annihilation. To gain momentum to one's precepts and principles or ideologies and ideals, one is ready to bulldoze and boomerang any amount of people and to inflict any degree of injuries to humanity. At this juncture, a spiritual and moral thirst alone suffices as a fitting remedy. Moreover, a spiritual and moral sense can be developed only in a rational human being.

5.2. Individual Responsibility: Personal Do's

We experience natural calamities like flood, earthquake, tsunami, etc. All these destructive elements would be able to cause a break in the smooth functioning of the cosmos. Humans had created beautiful roads and palaces in the world; but they could be mercilessly wiped out in an earthquake. Now, nature cannot do any reparative acts to make those roads and palaces in their original condition; rather we need the intelligence plus hard work of humans and their machines. This situation of nature seeking for the assistance of human hands and heads teaches us a great lesson that many things could be sorted out by personal effort and individual initiative. A personal word and deed could count a lot for singing the funeral band for terrorist operations. Such a personal effort demands the following responsibilities.

5.2.1. Know Thyself

A counterpart of terrorism in the modern world is abortion. Both are rooted in the principles of burial. Selfishness-cum- dehumanizing mentality provides license for abortion: abortion of human lives, rights, hopes, freedom, etc. Condemnation of innocent lives to death is the motto of abortion. Similar, too, is the case in a terrorist attack. Appreciation of oneself as a human being would alone help one to respect and admire others as humans. The corresponding dictum here is the saying of Socrates (469-399 BC) borrowed from the oracle of Delphi: "Know Thyself."[15] If we go through the annals of human heritage, many have been wiped out, many have had to coexist with sufferings throughout their life, and a few have been fortunate enough to be elated pushing back all the barriers. There has been an eternal conflict between man and nature. But, in course of time, man has succeeded in discovering many ways and means to overcome the natural obstacles. In spite of the innumerable discoveries, human fate rests on the brink of uncertainty even in this age of advancement. The reason for such a situation is the conflict between man and man. Knowledge of oneself and others, therefore, is a must in this era of destruction to cease the conflict.

---

[14] In the play "Macbeth," Shakespeare presents the character Lady Macbeth who plotted the murder of Duncan, an innocent King only to advance her husband's career.

5.2.2. Learn to Live and Not to Die

Konrad Lorenz in his book, *On Aggression*, speaks of biological and behavioural explanations for killing or enmity. According to him, most species possess behavioural analogies to morality, which helps them prevent killing the members of their own species. They cultivate inhibitory behaviours like submission, appeasement, or affection to choke out aggression taking place in one's own species. He found out that a human social organization is similar to that of rats, because like humans, rats are social and peaceful beings within their clans. However, they are veritable devils towards all the fellow members of their species not belonging to their own community.[16] Konrad's study proves that there is a dangerous and aggressive side in every human being. It also does not rule out the possibility that there is yet another side to the humans from which flows the streams of mercy and compassion ending in an ocean of love. Learning the ways that lead to these streams and ocean is a *tapasya*, a constant teleological effort. In other words, a happy and peaceful life is an art. In spite of the forces that pull us back to our death instincts, a rational being alone listens to the voice of his inner being and learns the *mantras* of success.

---

[15] This saying is inscribed in the temple of Apollo at Delphi. Plato in *Protagoras* (343b) ascribes it to the seven wise men. Plato, *Protagoras*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, in Mortimer J. Adler, ed., *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 6, Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 2003, 55.

[16] Konrad Lorenz, *On Aggression*, trans. Marjorie Kerr Wilson, New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1974, 237.

6. Conclusion

Walter Laqueur, chairman of the International Research Council of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, once said: "Terrorism is like pornography. No one can really define it, but everyone recognizes it when they see it."[17] It is true to a certain extent that our inability to understand the evil impact of terrorism will only be clear to us, as and when our near and dear ones become a victim or part of it. *Terra*[18] is a gift of God. Then, instead of terrors and cries, joy and peace should prevail among humanity. Any act that haunts the sacredness of our mother earth has a hammering effect upon her children. Therefore, terrorism is against the routine of the *terra*. Again, the mode of thinking in all humans is not the same. This is the irony of the so-called 'kismet'. All wrongs are right in terms of terrorist thinking. As a result, they silently proclaim a dehumanizing dictum that 'all empires have been cemented in blood'. Violence and torture, therefore, are used as the 'modus operandi' for their activities. So much so, they convincingly forget the cost of human blood. Every drop of blood is precious and even if gold, which has high monetary value in the material world, were passed into the human veins instead of blood, life could not be sustained. Blood is not manufactured and purchased but is what is received by birth. Therefore, every dehumanizing activity which becomes a crime against human blood is a disrespectful act towards the creator (the giver of human blood) and oneself (the receiver of it). It is said: 'Scratch any ideologue, you will find a terrorist'. Terror generating attacks are like lightning and thunder. Every lightening is followed by thunder. What is most harmful: lightening or thunder? Certainly, lightening! That is to say, the very act of sowing the terror is as great as the lightening that could provide electric shock to any being, whether humans, beasts, or plants.

Terrorism, being a man-made problem, human beings themselves should solve it. Therefore, what is important is not minimizing terrorism but uprooting it, because compared to all other modes of dehumanization, it is the most destructive form. Despite the destructive impact, terrorism can be uprooted. As Jacob Riis insists, every single effort to check terrorism is of great value: "When nothing seems to help,

---

[17] Cited in Griffith, *The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God*, 8.

[18] It is the Latin term for the earth.

I go and look at a stonecutter hammering away at his rock perhaps a hundred times without as much as a crack showing in it. Yet at the hundred and first blow it will split into two, and I know it was not that blow that did it – but all that had gone before."[19]

---

[19] Cited in Quddus, *The Mirage of Terrorism*, 394.

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 85-94

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELLING FOUNDATIONS OF TERRORISM

Jobi Thurackal◆

1. Introduction

Terrorism imposes heavy psychological impact on individuals and the society at large. The recent spurt of terrorist strikes has largely disturbed the hale and hearty homeostasis of our society. The affected individuals suffer from high risk of psychological impacts like developing stress reactions, post-traumatic stress disorder, and related anxiety and panic disorders. The ongoing terrorist threat causes chronic states of high stress resulting in stress-related health problems, of low grade suspicion, paranoia, and hyper vigilance, persistent feelings of anxiety, fear, and dread, confusion, and uncertainty. Psychology recognizes terrorism as a subject worthy of consideration only in 1982, when ten publications under this topic were listed in psychological abstracts.[1] This article focuses on taking precautionary steps than curative factors of the aftermath of terrorism and, thus, to deal with motivational foundations of terrorism and psychological principles to combat terrorism, where the orientation is more individualistic rather than communal. It goes deeper in search of identifying psychological realms of terrorism as well as terrorist as an individual who is inclined to destructive behaviour.

2. Psychological Definition of Terrorism

After studying all the available definitions on terrorism, Lord Carlile concludes: "There is no single definition of terrorism that commands full international approval."[2] There were more than hundred definitions of

---

◆**Jobi Thurackal** CMI, who holds a Masters in Psychological Counselling from Bangalore University, is currently teaching psychology and counselling in the Institute of Spirituality and Counselling, DVK (Bangalore).

[1] Ariel Merari, "Academic Research and Government Policy on Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3, 1 (2001), 88-102.

[2] Lord Carlile, *The Definition of Terrorism*, London: Secretary of State for the Home Department, 2007, 47.

terrorism in late 1980s that had appeared in the professional literature.[3] Some researchers are concerned that without a common definition, it won't be possible for the field to systematically accumulate a body of knowledge.[4] UN Resolution 1566 lists the following as terrorist acts:

> Criminal acts, including against civilians, committed with the intent to cause death or serious bodily injury, or taking of hostages, with the purpose to provoke a state of terror in the general public or in a group of persons or particular persons, intimidate a population or compel a government or an international organization to do or to abstain from doing any act, which constitute offences within the scope of and as defined in the international conventions and protocols relating to terrorism, are under no circumstances justifiable by considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or other similar nature, and calls upon all States to prevent such acts and, if not prevented, to ensure that such acts are punished by penalties consistent with their grave nature.[5]

Further, *Encyclopaedia of Psychology* defines terrorism as "a particular variant of the use or threat of violence to oppose the authority of governments."[6] Indeed, any terrorist activity is a form of calculated, organized, and deliberate violence; it is not a spontaneous outburst.

3. Motivations behind Terrorism

The major motives that are influential in terrorism can be classified into three categories: psychological, rational, and cultural. According to the Field Manual of US Army, the combinations of these motives form a terrorist.[7]

3.1. Psychological Motivation

Personal dissatisfaction with one's life and accomplishments is at the root of psychologically motivating a person to become part of terrorism.

---

[3] T. Strentz, "The Terrorist Organizational Profile: A Psychological Role Model," cited in Y. Alexander and J. M. Gleason, eds., *Behavioural and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism*. New York: Pergamon, 1981, 86-104.

[4] Randy Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, Tampa: University of South Florida, 2004, 65.

[5] Carlile, *The Definition of Terrorism*, 16.

[6] *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, 2000 Edition, vol. 8, "Terrorism," by Martha Crenshaw.

[7] Kirkhope, "The Basics: Combating Terrorism," 03 January 2007. http://www.terrorism.com.

Though there is no valid proof for clear psychopathy among terrorists, a nearly universal element is found in them. Terrorists have a tendency to project their own antisocial motivations onto others. They create a polarized "we *versus* they" outlook and they have no hesitation to dehumanize their victims. They make themselves free from any sort of ambiguity. Group acceptance is a stronger motivator than the stated political objectives of the organization. The need to belong to the group discourages resignations, and the fear of compromise disallows their acceptance.[8]

3.2. Rational Motivation

The rational terrorist will go through the goals and options, making a cost-benefit analysis. The alternatives will be sought to have less costly and more effective ways to achieve the objective than terrorism. To assess the risk, a rational terrorist weighs the target's defensive capabilities against one's own capabilities to successfully attack and calculates the group's capabilities to sustain the effort. The main concern of the terrorist group is that whether terrorism can toil for the desired purpose.[9]

3.3. Cultural Motivation

Cultural characteristic has a remarkable force on terrorism. Individuals identify themselves in terms of group membership which includes family, clan, or tribe. In such societies, there may be willingness to self-sacrifice. This phenomenon is present among terrorists who show readiness to offer their lives for their organization and cause. The lives of the other, being conceived as wholly evil in the terrorists' value system, can be destroyed with little or no regret. Religiously motivated terrorists analyze their acts with moral certainty and for them what would otherwise be extraordinary acts of desperation become a religious duty and it helps explain the high level of commitment and readiness to risk one's life.[10]

Martha Crenshaw suggests that there are at least four categories of motivation among terrorists: (1) the opportunity for action, (2) the need to belong, (3) the desire for social status, and (4) the acquisition of material reward.[11] She observes that many people are influenced to join by seeking solidarity with family, friends or acquaintances, and that for the individuals who become active terrorists, the initial attraction is often to the group, or community of believers, rather than to an abstract ideology or to violence.[12]

---

[8] Kirkhope, "The Basics: Combating Terrorism" [online].

[9] Kirkhope, "The Basics: Combating Terrorism" [online].

[10] Kirkhope, "The Basics: Combating Terrorism" [online].

Based on a review of the existing literature, another analyst, Randy Borum, identifies three motivational themes: injustice, identity, and belonging.[13] The synergistic effect of these dynamics forms the root cause of terrorism. Further, Luckabaugh and colleagues conclude along this line: "The real cause or psychological motivation for joining is the great need for belonging, a need to consolidate one's identity. A need to belong, along with an incomplete personal identity, is a common factor that cuts across the groups."[14]

4. Theoretical Foundations

Different theories and approaches in Counselling Psychology draw light on understanding the personality of a terrorist. Though terrorism is a recent concept inviting interest from among psychologists and counsellors, many of them deal with the issue differently focusing on the life of the individual terrorist as well as the society at large.

4.1. Psychoanalytic Approach

According to Freud's theory, aggression is an innate and instinctual human trait developed in a human person in the normal course of development. Later, he states that humans have the energy of life force (*eros*) and death force (*thanatos*) that seeks internal balance. Violence is perceived as the "displacement" of *thanatos* from self and onto others.[15] Jeanne N. Knutson strengthens this concept of Freud by stating that persons involve in terrorist activities as a result of feelings of rage and helplessness over the lack of alternatives.[16]

---

[11] Martha Crenshaw, "An Organizational Approach to the Analysis of Political Terrorism," *Orbis* 29, 3 (1985), 465-489.

[12] Martha Crenshaw, "The Subjective Reality of the Terrorist: Ideological and Psychological Factors in Terrorism," *Current Perspectives in international terrorism*, ed. Slater and Stohl, Hampshire: Macmillan, 1988, 12.

[13] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 24.

[14] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 26.

[15] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 12.

Carl Jung, a psychoanalyst, brings out two types of attitudes: introversion and extraversion. The introvert thinks, feels, and acts as though the subjective is what is the most important and the object is of less importance. The person has an orientation in life that particularly values subjective psychic contents. Those individuals are prone to be reserved, inscrutable and rather shy.[17] Crayton states the very basis for the activity of terrorists stems from their sense of low self-esteem and humiliation.[18]

In his article, "The Psychodynamic Dimension of Terrorism," Akhtar reaches the conclusion with evidence that most terrorists are deeply traumatized individuals. As children, they suffered chronic physical abuse and profound emotional humiliation. They grew up mistrusting others, loathing passivity, and dreading repeated reoccurrence of violation of their psychophysical boundaries.[19]

Various researches and terrorist case history analyses prove that periods of imprisonment and incarceration often facilitated experiences of injustice, abuse and humiliation.[20] Interviews done among the 35 incarcerated middle-eastern terrorists by Jerrold M. Post and colleagues extend a rich account of the impact of such experiences.[21] Histories of childhood abuse and trauma are very common among terrorists. Besides that, themes of perceived injustice and humiliation often are prominent in terrorist biographies and personal histories. These may be seen as indicators of vulnerability, as possible sources of motivation, or as mechanisms for acquiring or hardening one's militant ideology and not a causal explanation for terrorism.[22]

---

[16] Jeanne N. Knutson, "Social and Psychodynamic Pressures toward a Negative Identity," in Yonah Alexander and John M. Gleason, eds., *Behavioural and Quantitative Perspectives on Terrorism*, 105-152, New York: Pergamon, 1981.

[17] Richard Nelson Jones, *Six Key Approaches to Counselling and Therapy*, London: Continuum, 2000, 71.

[18] J. W. Crayton, "Terrorism and the Psychology of the Self," in L. Z. Freedman and Y. Alexander, eds., *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 33-41, Delaware: Scholarly Resources, 1983.

[19] S. Akhtar, "The Psychodynamic Dimension of Terrorism," *Psychiatric Annals* 29, 6 (1999), 350-355.

[20] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 39.

[21] Jerrold M. Post, E. Sprinzak, and L. Denny, "The Terrorists in Their Own Words: Interviews with 35 Incarcerated Middle Eastern Terrorists," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15, 1 (2003), 171-184.

4.2. Behavioural Approach

This approach states that "all human behaviour is learnt by adapting to outside conditions."[23] Oots and others state: "If aggression is a learned behaviour, then terrorism, a specific type of aggressive behaviour, can also be learned."[24] Many psychologists, like Dodge, Pettit, and Bates, suggest that aggressive behaviour tends to be formed from early childhood by a combination of stressful and unstimulating home atmosphere, harsh discipline, lack of maternal warmth and social support, exposure to aggressive adults and neighbourhood violence, transient peer groups, etc. Hartup observes that highly aggressive children tend to seek out friends like themselves and to egg each other onto antisocial acts.[25]

Another behavioural aspect is the fact that most of the terrorists depend on their leaders who deficit in the area of assertion. Wolpe defines assertive behaviour as "the socially appropriate verbal and motor expression of any emotion other than anxiety."[26] According to Alberti and Emmons, assertive behaviour is the expression of positive as well as negative thoughts and feelings.[27] Terrorists are inhibited from normal behaviours because of their neurotic fears. Such an environment leads them to act destructively rather than constructively.

From the perspective of the operant conditioning,[28] terrorists are reinforced financially, ideologically and emotionally by sponsors and supporters of terrorism. These reinforcers are mostly destructive in their operation, and they affect social, interactional, ego supportive, and affective life of the individuals who become gradually alienated from the mainstream of the society.

---

[22] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 40.

[23] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 7th ed., s.v. "Behaviourism."

[24] Kent Layne Oots and Thomas C. Wiegele, "Terrorist and Victim: Psychiatric and Physiological Approaches," *Terrorism: An International Journal* 8, 1 (1985), 11.

[25] Diane E. Papalia, Sally Wendkos Olds, and Ruth Duskin Feldman, *Human Development*, Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill, 2004, 291-292.

[26] J. Wolpe, *The Practice of Behaviour Therapy*, 2nd edition, Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990, 135.

[27] Richard Nelson Jones, *Theory and Practice of Counselling and Therapy*, 3rd edition, London: Continuum, 2001, 283.

[28] Operant conditioning is a type of behavioural conditioning referred to in a kind of learning process whereby a response is made more probable or more frequent by reinforcement.

4.3. Cognitive Model

Aaron Beck, a cognitive behavioural therapist, in his article, "Prisoners of Hate," identifies a cognitive model while observing the thinking pattern of the terrorist which is evidently similar to those who engage in violent acts with cognitive distortions, either solely as individuals or as members of a group. Cognitive distortions include overgeneralization, that is, the supposed sins of the enemy may spread to encompass the entire population. Terrorists are subjected to express dichotomous thinking that people are either totally good or totally bad. Lastly, they demonstrate tunnel vision; that is, they are engaged in their holy mission by focusing exclusively on the destruction of the target.[29]

Albert Ellis, the proponent of rational emotive behavioural therapy, looks at humans as those who are prone to irrationality and are exacerbated by the destructive environments, especially early in life. Ellis recognizes that humans are essentially highly suggestible. The irrational ideas are generated due to the following reasons. Primarily, the individual is unable to think clearly, especially when insisting on immediate rather than future gratification and being unable accurately to distinguish real from imagined fears. Secondly, it takes place when the individual's demands are childish and that are assuaged by magic; thirdly, when the individual is dependent on the planning and thinking of others, and his or her suggestibility or conditionability is greatest in childhood. Fourthly, irrational ideas may be generated when the individual lives in a community or family where members of the group themselves have irrational tendencies, prejudices and superstitions which they inculcate into others. Finally, it happens when this process is exacerbated by the indoctrinations and when cultures and religions can impart irrational, self-defeating and society-defeating analysis.[30]

4.4. Existential Approach

Victor Frankl recommends *Logotherapy* by stating that to be human means "being responsible for fulfilling the meaning potential inherent in a given life situation."[31] The foundation of human existence is the responsibility for one's life which is expressed in total freedom. It is not a 'freedom from' but rather a 'freedom to', the freedom to accept responsibility.[32] Human beings can reach out beyond themselves. Individuals can become most human when they transcend the boundaries of their selves by either fulfilling a meaning or encountering another person lovingly. According to Frankl, the basic human need is a search for meaning rather than a search for the self. Unless life points to something beyond itself, survival is pointless, meaningless and impossible. Terrorism and its ideologies take away individuals from their responsibilities as members of a society. Terrorists lack in finding meaning beyond their selves. They cannot go beyond their destructive ideologies and terrorist activities.

---

[29] Aaron Beck, "Prisoners of Hate," *Behaviour Research and Therapy* 40, 3 (2002), 209-216.

[30] Jones, *Theory and Practice of Counselling and Therapy*, 304-305.

4.5. Family Therapeutic Approach

Lloyd De Mause, a psychohistorian, affirms: "The roots of terrorism lie … in the extremely abusive families of the terrorists."[33] Patterson and others observe that parents of chronic delinquents often fail to reinforce good behaviour in early childhood and are harsh or inconsistent, or both, in punishing misbehaviour. Those children get payoffs for antisocial behaviour, especially when they act up, as they may gain attention or get their own way.[34]

Apart from the individual level, the families of terrorists face both internal and external threats and they develop a dysfunctional system and have to keep a rigid boundary where outsiders are strictly restricted. Children of those families lack in social skills and modelling. The family structure of terrorists, which is a set of covert rules that govern transactions in the family, may be that of rigid boundaries where the individual fosters autonomy, growth, and mastery while terribly limiting warmth, affection and nurture.

Motives for terrorism are largely unconscious and arise from hostility toward one's parents and it is the product of early abuse and maltreatment.[35] In the early 1980s, Jerrold Post suggested that the anarchic-ideologue, one form of dysfunction, in which individuals come from severely dysfunctional families, have suffered severe abuse or maltreatment, leading them to have hostile feelings toward their parents. Their extremist ideology is a displacement of their rebellion and hostility onto the state authority.[36] Many psychologists suggest that ineffective parenting leads children to delinquent behaviour and association with deviant peers.[37]According to Baumrind, among different parenting styles, the authoritarian parenting affects the child very negatively. The child tends to be more discontented, withdrawn, and distrustful.

---

[31] Victor Frankl, *The Unconscious God: Psychotherapy and Theology*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975, 125.

[32] Jones, *Theory and Practice of Counselling and Therapy*, 225.

[33] L. deMause, "The Childhood Origins of Terrorism," *Journal of Psychohistory* 29, 4 (2002), 340-348.

[34] Papalia *et al.*, *Human Development*, 448.

[35] Borum, *Psychology of Terrorism*, 18.

5. Conclusion

2005 World Summit Outcome adopted by the United Nations General Assembly by its resolution 60/1 states: "We strongly condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security."[38] Therefore, combating terrorism is a process of establishing international harmony through individual reformation. Any destructive act of a terrorist is the outcome of his/her inability to differentiate rationality and emotionality. A healthy personality is developed when the individual can differentiate them. Differentiation of the self is an intra-psychic and interpersonal process. An intra-psychic differentiation is the ability of the individual to separate feeling from thinking. If it is not differentiated, one finds it difficult to distinguish thoughts from feelings. Since one's intellect is so flooded with feelings, one is almost incapable of objective thinking. The differentiated person is able to balance thinking and feeling, being capable of the restraint and objectivity, which comes with the ability to resist the pull of emotional impulses. It is achieved through the initiation of counselling at the individual (personal counselling) or familial (family counselling) or group (group counselling) levels.

---

[36] Jerrold M. Post, "Notes on a Psychodynamic Theory of Terrorist Behaviour," *Terrorism*, 7 (1987), 241-256.

[37] Papalia *et al.*, *Human Development*, 448.

[38] Cited in http://www.unodc.org/images/A60288.pdf.

Journal of Dharma 32, 1 (January-March 2007), 95-102

BOOK REVIEWS

Ignatius Jesudasan, *Roots of Religious Violence: A Critique of Ethnic Metaphors*, Delhi: Media House, 2007, pages: 175, ISBN: 81-7495-265-9.

Roots of Religious Violence, by Ignatius Jesudasan, brings in a new perspective of looking at religious violence. In a world, where the security of each nation is overshadowed by terrorist strikes in the name of religion, this book can play a constructive role in building up a terror free generation. Jesudasan holds ethnic metaphors guilty of propagating violence. These ethnic metaphors are created by religions to point to the divine. In the course of time, however, these ethnic metaphors are manipulated in such a way that they confer the authority on one group, as these metaphors adorn a sacred outlook. As times pass by, groups and individuals with vested interests remove the shell of metaphor and, in turn, it becomes a literal world which demands cognitive closure from other metaphors, triggering violence for the superiority of one over the other. For proving this, the author uses biblical narratives. Even though he bases himself on the Bible, he brings in also the change in religious outlook in the Indian scenario with the rise of the Hindutva forces. The author identifies the rise of the Hindu extremists who propagate violence along the strategies adopted by certain Semitic religions which are violent and cognitively closed, while insisting that the Asiatic religions are basically non-violent. This book begins with a chapter titled, "The Making of the Metaphor and Myth." It is logically built up exposing the underlying violence in the biblical texts promoted by ethnic metaphors and myths and ends up in a positive note which is titled, "Moving beyond the Violence of Metaphors," where the author asks a vital question, "Does the end to metaphor mean end of religion?"

Basing on certain historical examples of violence within and among religions, the author co-relates historical violence to religious faith and consciousness. The author unearths the violence in the metaphor by giving seven ways, taking into account the fact that the metaphor gives the impression of having said more, while it really hides more than it reveals, in leaving unsaid what would need to be said (44). Religion, thus, banks on these metaphors, wherein they strive for dominance, which results in the division of ethnic identities. Keeping track of the Christian history, in which he locates a people who were persecuted first, who then started persecuting others, the author states that history proves religion to be an ideological metaphor of the human ambition at first to acquire power which they lack, and then the ambition to maintain or extend it (58). Various Semitic religions played this role; at present, the Hindu extremists play this role.

By analyzing the Adamic myth, the author unveils the violence of cognitive closure inscribed in it. This myth has been formulated in such a way that prophets got all prominence so much so that there were ethnic closures. The metaphor in the Old Testament is brought into the scanner to bring forth the question, "Is the God of Bible violent?" The following words of the author give the answer: It is in the sacred, as metaphorical word of language that violence lies hidden and lurking, waiting for socio-political occasions to explode in all its destructiveness (83). Violent and non-violent aspects of the Jewish ritual of paschal feast and Christian ritual of the Lord's Supper are discussed, exposing, the violence veiled in sacred sphere of ritual. Taking concrete examples from the Acts of Apostles, the author brings to light the violence of the little folk turned kingdom. By stating that theologies as the metaphors of ethnic societies are in conflict, he draws flak on the church which considers itself an ideal type of community that aims at the annihilation of other ethnic religious identities. The sublime example of Jesus stands as a big question mark; he, by his death on the cross, was able to draw even the ethnic enemies into the circle of ethnic neighbours to be loved (141). Moving further, the regrettable practice of dividing the society into 'saints and sinners' is considered by the author as a lively metaphor of the violent construction of the socialising sacred sphere itself. Roots of religious violence end in an optimistic note that hopes for the emergence of models of non-violent societies and non-violently literal language.

The book is, indeed, a wonderful scholarly read with thought provoking insights. Hats off to Ignatius Jesudasan, for his daring endeavour in bringing to light the violent metaphors clothed in sacred language. Rather than moving through the periphery of the violence in the name of religion, the author is successful in unearthing the underlying causes behind this phenomenon in a convincing manner. This book is a small step, bringing out the violence in the biblical metaphors, but this will, indeed, be a giant leap if scholars of other religions do go for a search for the roots of violence in their own respective scriptures. *The Roots of*

Religious Violence: A Critique of Ethnic Metaphors will definitely make a big difference in the terror ridden modern world.

Jeff Shawn

Lambert J. Leijssen, *With the Silent Glimmer of God's Spirit: A Postmodern Look at the Sacraments*, trans. Marie Baird with a Foreword by George S. Worgul, Jr., New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006, pages: xii + 147; ISBN: 0-8091-4437-9.

It is, indeed, very significant that Professor Lambert J. Leijssen's book originally written in Dutch and published by NV Uitgeverij Altiora Averbode in 2003 under the title, *Met de stille glans van Gods Geest: Sacramenten en postmoderniteit*, should so quickly be made available in its English translation. On the one hand, it appears as a compendium of his pastoral experience, and thirty-five years of tutorial service in the area of sacramental theology. Coming gradually to the close of his active professorial career and drawing from the wealth of his experience as a seasoned pastor, he offers an articulate and profoundly challenging contribution to the on-going process of sacramental reconstruction and reformulation. Written in the context of the evolving consciousness, generally designated postmodern in the West, it is proper and timely that a follow-up of the Dutch version in its English translation be produced as one of his lasting testaments bequeathed to the academic world of Anglophone peoples, and also as his submission to make sacramental celebration more meaningful in the church today. In confrontation with postmodern sensibilities and the consequent declining interest or gradual relapsing of the sacraments into meaninglessness, Leijssen elucidates the intricacies involved in sacramental celebrations and widens their horizons for the realization of authentic and incarnate sacramental experience.

This book, which is divided into ten chapters, contains also an epilogue, notes, and study questions raised by the author to provoke further reflections and enquiries into the themes treated in each of the chapters. To begin with, Leijssen explains in chapter one the anthropological and theological conditions underlying his propositions in this book. Primarily, he opines that the experience and celebration of the sacraments in the contemporary postmodern context must depart from the hitherto hylemorphic interpretation and consequent stereotype approach known in sacramental praxis and be situated or anchored on the general ritual behaviour of humankind. As such he makes the sacraments assume their rightful place in the general rituals of human life as "metaphoric celebrations" of the important moments of the existence of the Christian as a human person. In this sense, he exposes and disposes the sacraments to share a common point of departure with other human rituals both sacred and secular (1).

With this background contention, Leijssen delineates the general tenor of this book, sets its content in the right perspective, and, as a matter of fact, sharpens the focus of the reader to expect nothing other than a sacramental interpretation grounded anthropologically on human condition and experience. Thus, for Leijssen, as he also maintains strongly in all his writings, it is extremely difficult if not practically impossible to think of any authentic liturgical celebration of the sacraments that is not cast within the ambience of community of beings encountering and interacting with one another. To buttress this position, he studies intensely the contributions of other theologians (particularly, Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, and Piet Fransen) at sacramental renewal, and builds on their insights to develop in the second chapter "new visions in sacramental theology." Hence, he employs such concepts as "gift," "language," "icon," "light," etc., to talk about the sacraments in the postmodern context. They have a capacity to embrace and accommodate the giver and the receiver, the speaker and the listener, or the reality revealed and its beholder in a balanced interpersonal and human relationship – a healthy engagement or dialogical encounter.

Discussing the individual sacraments in this perspective, Leijssen categorizes them into sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist), healing (Reconciliation and Anointing), and vocation (Marriage and Holy Orders) insofar as they are being experienced as "high points" in which the silent glimmer of God's Spirit breaks through in the various situations of the individual's concrete existence. The grace of each sacrament, therefore, becomes an offered gift of the Holy Spirit itself, by which the Christian's daily life is illuminated with the "inner glow" or "divine light," which imparts a silent glimmer to daily existence" (41). He sets out the ecumenical implications of this new insight in the last chapter of this book as his challenge to the mainstream churches (Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and the churches of the Protestant Reformation) in the face of their almost endemic disease of scandalous division in sacramental praxis.

Remarkably, this book is not a mere conglomeration of ideas, but rather a penetration and traversing of the different facets of sacramental theology, including the fundamental, catechetical, liturgical, without also lacking in missiology. As a matter of fact, translated in very readable and understandable English, the author provides the reader with a refreshing insight into the contemporary problematic in the theological interpretation, pastoral application, and liturgical celebration of the sacraments. Thus, he does not only lead the reader to the heart of the problem, but also indicates possible hermeneutical measures for its authentic reconciliation and resolution. His methodological approach developed within the postmodern ambience, no doubt, throws unquenchable light into sacramentology, not only to guide the West as they struggle to overcome the current postmodern sacramental problematic under the pangs of a cultural shift, but also give a sense of direction to the imminent prospects of sacramental praxis so that other societies and cultures may be awakened to strike their own notes and dance accordingly to the postmodern tune in the practice of the sacraments.

Okoro Tobias Onyedikachukwu

Werner Chakkalackal, *Where Will East West Meet?* Bangalore: CFD Publications & Asian Trading Corporation, 2005, pages: 121, ISBN: 81-7086-365-1.

Where Will East West Meet? presents a new vision of the future of humanity, in the light of the philosophies of the East and West. As anxieties are mounting about the future of our society, today's greatest danger is confusion of thoughts. In this context, Werner Chakkalackal makes a synthetic study on the fundamental philosophical concepts in Greek and Indian thought, in their respective backgrounds, and tries to compare the 'spirit' that animated these divergent approaches to the perennial questions, which have agitated human mind throughout its history, such as the origin and the mystery of this universe, the nature of God and man's self and his destiny.

The author also makes a general comparison of both traditions, to arrive at a common pattern in which they show similarities and contrasts between the pre-Socratic and early Vedic philosophical developments. There is a strong contrast between the 'lay philosophers' of Greece with their scientific preoccupations and the religious starting point of the

Brahmins. It is interesting to note that even though the early Greek thinkers have been personally religious, their philosophical thought tends towards a materialist conception of the world. On the other hand, in India, although religious practices may have been very materialist in content their philosophical thought tends towards a theological monism. Thus, starting from similar points of explanations of reality, the two cultures took two different roads. So, the author raises the relevant question: where will East and West meet?

An East-West dialogue can be fruitful, only when the confrontation is not merely between the peripheral and temporary aspects of both cultures, but between their genuine foundations. According to the author, Christ, "the Word made Flesh," which is the central mystery of the Christian faith should bring the fulfilment of both Greek and Indian understanding of the Absolute.

Jojo Parecattil

James H. Kroeger with Eugene F. Thalman and Jason K. Dy, ***Once Upon a Time in Asia: Stories of Harmony and Peace*****,** Manila: Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications, 2006, pages: 165, ISBN: 97-1030-541-7.

This book is a collection of stories and anecdotes. The authors appropriately develop the message of peace and harmony through powerful stories and thought-provoking anecdotes.

The book under review has eight sections, an introduction and a list of stories. It is written in the introduction that stories help us explore the deeper dimensions of life and mystery of our own being. They open a window through which we can view the world, perceive meaning and gain insight. Stories capture the human experiences of joy, peace, grace, forgiveness, compassion, conversion, reconciliation, and unity. The stories that emerge from the rich traditions of Asia can shed light on a common spiritual journey, whether they are Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, or Christian. Human beings are on a spiritual pilgrimage. Great Asian teachers used stories, parables, etc., to teach their followers. The narratives of this collection include a variety of forms: Asian oral and written literatures, poems, prayers, experiences, myths, and fictions. Some inspiring pictures are also included in this work.

The first section is titled "In the Beginning." It speaks about the origin of life. Life is a gift, an awesome and precious treasure. All are searching for happiness in one way or other. But sin is always a hindrance for its realization. The stories and anecdotes of this section, by and large, lay stress upon the fact that our life is the gift of God.

The second section is named "Living in Asia." It starts with a Japanese proverb, "fall seven times, rise up eight." The theme is all about the real life situations in Asia. Asian people have dreams and aspirations for the basics of life, for happiness, for peace and prosperity. Even though the economic progress has been made in some areas, it does not fully cover the entire population. Majority still reel under utter poverty, marginalization, etc.

"The Importance of Family" is the heading of the third section. It deals with family and marriage in Asia. Family values are still preserved even amidst modern changes and challenges. People in Asia have a strong natural affinity to familial ties. Children and elderly people have a special place in the families of Asia. Children are considered gifts of God. Parents and elderly people are revered in the families as well as in larger societies. There are, however, changes in the value of families and societies due to secularization, consumerism, etc.

In "Caring for One Another in Community," the fourth section, everyone is said to be longing for a community by which one can achieve authentic humanity. It says that community lives by daily sharing and caring. It is a good example for the community life in Asia where people of different religions live together as a community. The daily living together in harmony and peace is described as "good neighbourology."

In the fifth section, the rich diversity of cultures in Asia is presented under the title, "Culture Matters." People are shaped by their cultures. Asian culture contains a lot of truth, holiness, goodness, and creativity. "Wisdom from the Orient," the sixth section deals with wisdom from the Asian countries. Through different stories and anecdotes the authors try to educate the people about practical norms for moral conduct.

The seventh section is named "One God, Many Faith Traditions." This section deals with different religious experiences in Asia. People respect other religions and their truth in Asia. Basically, all belong to one and the same family. We are marching towards the same destiny by different ways. "Seeds of God in Asian Soil" is the eighth and last section of this book. Asian people are very strong in their religious faith. In Asia faith and life go hand in hand. We cannot separate them as two different entities. Stories and incidents narrated in this section deal with meditation, presence of God in the universe, etc.

This book is a great help especially for preachers and teachers. In this era of communal tension and religious fanaticism, this book has a lot to contribute. Even the common man can understand the meaning of the stories. Definitely this book will enrich readers through the inspiring entries.

Roy Vettikuzhiyil

Faculty of Philosophy
Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram
Bangalore, India

LICENTIATE IN PHILOSOPHY (LPh)

Training for self expression...
Discerning the meaning of existence...
Deepening knowledge of philosophical systems...
Equipping to teach philosophy...
Learning to philosophize...

Licentiate in Philosophy is a two year (4 semesters) master's programme offered by the Faculty of Philosophy at *Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram* (Bangalore); it gives students opportunity to specialize in a particular area of philosophy, along with a comprehensive and contemporary synthesis of various philosophical disciplines.

With an objective of training the students in scientific research in philosophy, with special emphases on enabling them to teach philosophy in centres of higher religious education and to perform functions that demand higher philosophical competence, our programme has the following components: regular lectures, tutorial courses, seminars, written assignments, group presentations and discussions, practical exercises and a scientifically prepared thesis. The course offers ample opportunities for personal training for self-expression, and private study and personal work under the guidance of competent teachers.

The Licentiate (Masters) Degree in Philosophy that is granted at the end of the successful completion of this programme qualifies the student for admission to a Doctorate in Philosophy in all Ecclesiastical Faculties of Philosophy all over the world.

Areas of Specialization

a) Western Philosophy
b) East-West Philosophical Studies
c) Contemporary Psychological Trends: East and West
d) Inter-Religious Studies

Structure of Licentiate in Philosophy Programme

The Programme consists of the following:

a) Eighteen compulsory courses (six courses in one semester)
b) Three Tutorials (one tutorial in one semester)
c) Three seminars (one seminar in one semester)
d) One Research Paper (not exceeding 6,000 words), in the field of specialization, at the end of the second semester.
e) A working knowledge of one of the classical languages, viz., Sanskrit, Latin or Greek, and one modern language viz., German, French, etc.
f) Comprehensive viva voce examination at the beginning of fourth semester
g) One thesis (not exceeding 20,000 words) in the field of specialization (fourth semester)

Scholarships

Various attractive scholarships are available to deserving candidates. Details are available at the office.

For further details, please contact:

Registrar, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram **Bangalore 560029, India** **Tel: +91-80-41116333** **Fax: 41116000** **Email: registrar@dvk.in** **Website: www.dvk.in**	**Dr. Saju Chackalackal** **Director, Licentiate in Philosophy** **Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram** **Bangalore 560029, India** **Tel: +91-80-41116219/9480022339** **Email: saju@chackalackal.com**

Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, a pontifical athenaeum of philosophy, theology and canon law, is empowered to grant degrees, including licentiate and doctorate in philosophy and theology, licentiate in Oriental Canon Law and Master's Degree in Formative Spirituality and Counselling.

Visit: www.dvk.in

Subscription Rates

(Effective from January 2006)

Annual Subscription:

India	Rs. 200.00
All Other Countries (Air Mail)	$30.00 or £15.00

Advance Subscription for Three Years:

India	Rs. 500.00
Other Countries (Air Mail)	$80.00 or £41.00

Foundation Subscription (Life Membership):

India	Rs. 5,000.00
Other Countries	$500.0 (or its equivalent)

Single Copy:

India	
Current Issue	Rs. 60.00
Back Issue	Rs. 75.00
Other Countries (Air Mail) (bulk orders will have special reduced prices)	
Current Issue	$10.00 or £5.00
Back Issue	$10.00 or £5.00

Payment is to be made in favour of "**Journal of Dharma, Bangalore.**"
Payments and other subscription related communications may be sent to:
The Managing Editor
Journal of Dharma, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram,
Bangalore 560 029, India.

Editorial Correspondence:

All manuscripts for publication should be sent in electronic format (preferably in MS Word format); entries for consideration should be scientifically documented with notes (MLA style). Digital copy shall be sent to:

The Chief Editor
Journal of Dharma, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram
560 029 Bangalore, India
E-mail: saju@chackalackal.com
Fax: +91-80-4111 6000

All business correspondence should be addressed to:

The Managing Editor
Journal of Dharma, Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram
560 029 Bangalore, India
E-mail: info@journalofdharma.com

Reg. No. R.N. 27399/75 ISSN: 0253-7222

JOURNAL OF DHARMA

An International Quarterly of Religions and Philosophies

Forthcoming Issues

2007 Vol. 32:

2. Religious Literacy and Secularism
3. Law and Religion: Forces of Liberation
4. Religion, Economics, and Development

2008 Vol. 33:

1. Human Person: Brain-Mind-Soul
2. Religious Ethos and Environmental Ethics
3. Religion and National Integration
4. Religion and Language

2009 Vol. 34:

1. Sex and Religion: Contemporary Response
2. Trends in Philosophy in Third Millennium
3. Politics of Violence and Religion
4. Re-emergence of Religion

International Indexing: ***Journal of Dharma*** is indexed in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*, Chicago; in *Arts & Humanities Citation Index* (A&HCI) and *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities* (CC/A&B) of the Institute of Scientific Information (ISI), University City Science Center, Philadelphia, PA 19104; in *Philosopher's Index*, Philosopher's Information Center, 1616 E. Wooster St., Bowling Green University, OH 43402; in *ATLA Religion Database*, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606; *Religion Indexes*, 5600 South Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL. 60637; in *Bowker Serials Bibliographies*, 1180 Avenue of the Americas, NY 10036; in *Science of Religion* published by Root and Branches, Cambridge, England.

Microfilms: University Microfilms International, Michigan, Religious & Theological Abstracts: Myerstown, PA 17067.

Website: www.journalofdharma.com
Email: editor@journalofdharma.com

Published by
Dharma Research Association
Centre for the Study of World Religions
Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, 560 029 Bangalore, India

Printed at
National Printers
560 029 Bangalore, India